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# **India in Home Polity**

**JULY—DEC. 1928**

# Chronicle of Events.

July 1928.

- 1 July 28 8th Session of the Surma Valley Conference at Sylhet urged the boycott of Simon Commission and supported the Bardoli Satyagraha movement.
- 2 July do. In view of the Government announcement that the question of appointing a Committee to co-operate with the Simon Commission will come up before the Bengal Council on the 9th July, representative meetings and associations all over Bengal urged upon the elected members of the Council to stand solidly together and defeat the Government motion.
- 4 July do. Mr. Chamanlal's resolution censuring the British Labour party for co-operating with the Simon Commission disallowed in the Br. Commonwealth Labour Conference, necessitating the withdrawal of the Indian delegates.
- 7 July do. The Bardoli Satyagraha—The policy of Bombay Government to leave the re-assessment of Agricultural land and the enhancement of revenue in the hands of individual and irresponsible officers at Bardoli with no effective check on them strongly condemned by all India both in press and in platform.  
Sind Muslim Political Conference held at Karachi under Dr. Alam.  
First Conference of the British Section of the League against Imperialism held in London.
- 8 July do. Terrible Railway smash at Belur, E. I. Railway resulting in the death of 21 passengers including the driver and injury to about 32 persons.
- 10 July do. Bengal Council—Government motion to the formation of a Simon Committee carried—Swarajist amendment for postponing the appointment negatived.
- 13 July do. Mr. Vernon Hartshorn, Labour member of the Indian Statutory Commission apologised for the libellous remarks he made against the Tatas accusing them as the worst employers in the world. The speech caused great resentment among the Indians and was strongly criticised both in press and platform. Writs of libel were issued against him and resignation was demanded of him from the Commission.  
At the Anglo-Indian Association Luncheon held in London, Lord Meston urged that Anglo-Indians should adopt the view-point of the minority which, by virtue of being so, had its rights and privileges—in other words they should not identify with Indians styling themselves as Statutory Indians.
- 16 July do. Labour troubles at the Fort Gloucester Jute Mills, Bowraah,—Police opened fire wounding 28 Bengali and Oriya workmen.
- 18 July do. The Bardoli Satyagraha—High hopes were entertained of a settlement of the long-protracted Bardoli struggle as a result of the Conference between the Governor of Bombay and the deputation of the peasants, but to the disappointment of all after a free and frank discussion of the conditions of agreement for about three hours the Conference ended in a fiasco. The deputationists put before the Governor the most modest demands of the suffering peasants which were not accepted. Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel, leader of the deputation, wanted (a) A judicial

enquiry by a non-official committee (b) Restoration of forfeited lands (c) Compensation for lands which were sold (d) Release of persons convicted in Satyagraha cases and (e) Reinstatement of Talatis and Patels who had resigned. The Governor persisted in the condition that the people must pay or deposit the enhanced assessment to a third party pending the result of re-enquiry and he also refused to restore forfeited lands. As regards Judicial enquiry His Excellency wanted it to be done by a Judicial Officer or Revenue Officer. These knotty points were not settled and the Conference broke up without success. Belur Train Smash—Two damage suits for five lakhs each filed in the High court by the Secretary of State and the East Indian Railway against the "Forward" of Calcutta.

- 19 July '28 General Strike on the S. I. Railway—At midnight all gangmen, coolies and portmen appeared before Station Masters and placed before them their lamps and keys and peacefully went away saying that they could no longer work on low wages.
- 23 July do. The Bardoli Satyagraha—Addressing the Bombay Council, H. E. the Governor gave an ultimatum of a fortnight to the Satyagraha leaders to agree to the Government proposals by plainly telling them that there could be no enquiry unless revenue was paid off and in default the Government would not hesitate to take any step to suppress the campaign of civil disobedience. The pronouncement received with a keen sense of resentment throughout India—On the same day in the House of Commons replying to a question, Earl Winterton lent his full support to the Governor in launching coercive measures.
- 28 July do. 4th Annual Conference of Bangiya Janasangha held in Calcutta under Sj. Mohini Mohon Das—The President traced the miseries of the people to ignorance and foreign yoke and said that no improvement in the conditions of the masses could be expected till Swarnj was established.
- 30 July do. Consequent on the big Ganapati procession in Bangalore, a party of Moslems attacked Hindus with lathis and swords and there were also gunshots injuring 80 Hindus.

## August 1928.

- 1 Aug. '28 Eighth Death anniversary of Lokmanya Tilak observed throughout India with due solemnity and reverence.  
Bombay Council—Motion to elect a committee to co-operate with the Simon Commission carried.
- 2 Aug. do. Debate on Indian affairs in the House of Commons initiated by Mr. Johnston, a Labour member.
- 3 Aug. do. Bengal Council—Personnel of Members of the Bengal Simon Committee announced.
- 6 Aug. do. End of Bardoli Dispute—Honourable Settlement announced by a Bombay Government Communique ordering enquiry into the enhancement of revenue.
- 9 Aug. do. Third Congress of the Labour and Socialist International held at Brussels—Mr. Chamanlal's exposition of British Labour's hypocrisy.
- 13 Aug. do. Bardoli Victory Day celebrated at Surat with pomp and pageant—According to the terms of settlement all Satyagrahi prisoners were released and Talatis reinstated.
- 15 Aug. do. Opening day of the autumn session of C. P. Council—Governor in his opening speech to the members gave them the choice of electing a committee to co-operate with the Simon Commission or refuse to do it.



- 18 Aug. '28 C. P. Council--Resignation of Mr. Deshmukh, the Minister, announced,
- 19 Aug. do. The World Youth Peace Congress held in Holland--Mr. Nalinakshya Sanyal delivered an eloquent speech on behalf of India.
- 21 Aug. '28 B. & O. Council--Government motion to elect a committee to co-operate with the Simon Commission carried--Swarajist amendment demanding a Round Table Conference rejected.
- 25 Aug. do. New Ministry with Mr. Raghavendra Rao formed in the Central Provinces.
- 28 Aug. do. All-Parties Conference to discuss the Nehru Committee Report opened at Lucknow in an atmosphere of unprecedented toleration and goodwill under the Presidency of Dr. Ansari.
- 29 Aug. do. All-Parties Conference at Lucknow after long discussion adopted the Dominion Status without restricting the liberty of other political parties whose goal was complete independence. Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, whose ideal was complete independence dissociated himself from the resolution and put up his grounds in clear terms. S. J. Subhas Chandra Bose, a signatory to the Report, in a speech said that he did not believe in Dominion Status but approved it as a preliminary step to independence.
- 30 Aug. do. The Independence for India League formed at Lucknow by the signatories of the statement on independence at the All-Parties Conference.

## September 1928.

- 3 Sept. '28 Opening Day of the Madras Council--Official motion to elect a committee to co-operate with the Simon Commission carried in the teeth of Swarajist opposition who walked out in a body after their amendment had been rejected.
- 4 Sept. do. Opening Day of the autumn session of the Legislative Assembly at Simla--Mr. G. P. Singh's adjournment motion to repudiate the malicious attack on the President by the "Times of India," Bombay.
- 5 Sept. do. President Patel's statement in the Assembly on a separate Assembly office.
- 6 Sept. do. In the Assembly President Patel's ruling restraining the introduction of Public Safety Bill on the objection of Pandit Motilal gave rise to sinister propaganda in British Press--The Simla correspondent of the "Daily Telegraph" cabled the following:--"It is difficult to find a more conclusive evidence of India's unfitness for self-rule than in the example given in the Assembly to-day. The decision given by the Hon. Mr. Patel is regarded as illogical to say least and it was strongly suggested that it was due to the pressure on behalf of party interests."
- 7 Sept. do. "It will be suicidal for India to accept Dominion Status as the goal for Dominion Status can never be tantamount to sovereign independence" declared Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar, a former President of the Congress.
- 8 Sept. do. Ladies of all shades of opinion and representing every Women's Society of Bengal accorded unanimous support to the Child Marriage and Age of Consent Bills in a crowded meeting in Calcutta under the presidency of Lady Mukherjee.
- 10 Sept. do. Government taken by surprise on the Public Safety Bill on Pandit Motilal's point of order.  
Sir John Simon's cable to the Viceroy to constitute the Central Committee--Assembly members' challenge to the Viceroy demanding dissolution of the Assembly and a general election on the issue involved.
- 11 Sept. do. Opening Day of the autumn session of the Council of State at Simla.

- 13 Sept. '28 Exciting debate in the Assembly on the Coastal Traffic Bill—Sir James Simpson's mean attack on Mr. Haji.  
The Long drawn Labour strike at Jamshedpur brought to a satisfactory close by the intervention of Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose—Nearly 70 per cent of the strikers rejoined work.
- 14 Sept. do, Startling disclosures made by the Simla correspondent of the "Pioneer" implicating officials in a campaign of vilification and insinuations against the impartiality of the President of the Assembly—This was brought to the notice of the President by Pt. Motilal Nehru on the floor of the House.
- 15 Sept. do, Motion for a Select Committee on the Public Safety Bill carried in the Assembly.
- 17 Sept. do, Government of India's despatch on the constitution of a new Assembly office issued—Secretary and not President to be the head.  
Opening Day of the autumn session of the Madras Council.
- 18 Sept. do, U. P. Council official motion to elect a committee to co-operate with the Simon Commission carried after the Swarajists and Nationalists had left the Chamber in protest.
- 20 Sept. do, In an article in the "Daily Telegraph" Prof. Rushbrook Williams, Late Director of Public Information, Government of India, wrote that the motive behind the Princes' claim for independence was to prevent the contagion of nationalism catching the subjects of their states.
- 22 Sept. do, U. P. Council—Mr. Chintamani's motion of "no-confidence" on the Education Minister carried by the casting vote of the President amidst Swarajist and Nationalist cheers.  
All Bengal Students' Conference held in Calcutta under the Presidency of Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru.  
In the Assembly Mr. Orerar made an important statement on the relations between the Chair and the House and the Government. As Leader of the House he expressed regret for the expression of certain official members impugning the conduct of the President and assured both the President and the House that there would be no recurrence.  
The Assembly Congress Party removed the ban placed on members in regard to attendance at levees at Viceregal Lodge.
- 23 Sept. do, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru in a statement in connection with the recent speech of Maharaja Bikaner on the position of Indian Princes repudiated the suggestion that the Lucknow Conference was actuated by a spirit of hostility against the Princes.
- 24 Sept. do, In the Assembly the motion for the consideration of the Public Safety Bill as amended by the Select Committee was put to vote and defeated amidst Swarajist and Nationalist cheers by the casting vote of the President—Government intimated not to proceed with the Bill this session.
- 25 Sept. do, In the Assembly President Patel's bold stand as upholder of parliamentary and popular liberties in cancelling the passes to the "Times of India" and "Daily Telegraph" correspondents.
- 28 Sept. do, Communal riots—At Surat when the Ganapati procession was passing by a mosque a fracas took place between the Hindu processionists and Moslems who objected to music and the situation took a serious turn when police fired six shots killing two and injuring about one hundred—Similar trouble arose at Nasik where stones were thrown at a mosque but the intervention of police arrested casualties—Another occurred in Hyderabad (Deccan) over the burial of a Moslem and an affray took place between Sikhs and Moslems in a Gurdwara.  
Punjab Peasants' Conference held at Lyallpur protested against the Trades Disputes Bill declaring strikes illegal.
- 29 Sept. do, Punjab Political Conference held at Lyallpur under the Presidency of Lala Dunichand urged withdrawal of British guardianship and the goal of India being complete independence.  
The Indian Christians of Bengal in a meeting in Calcutta under the Chairmanship of Principal J. R. Bannerjee whole-heartedly supported the Nehru Report and urged recall of the memorandum of the All-India Christian Conference submitted to the Simon Commission.

## October 1928.

- 1 Oct. '28 The Independence for India League for the province of Bengal published their manifesto as well as their provisional programme of action and invited the public to offer constructive suggestions and criticisms.  
At the Labour Conference, Birmingham Mr. Brockway's motion to refer back the Parliamentary Report on Labour participation in the Simon Commission rejected by a huge majority—Mr. Macdonald in reply showed his imperialist mettle by declaring that the Parliamentary Party will not take instructions from any outside body.
- 4 Oct. do. Bombay Mill Strike called off following a seven hours' conference between representatives of the millowners and the joint strike committee—Government consented to appoint a committee to inquire into the conditions. Pending the publication of the report the rates and wages of March 1927 were to be paid.
- 6 Oct. do. Maharaja Mahmudabad opposed the proposal to hold an All-Parties Muslim Conference and declared that the Nehru Report was the only feasible basis of workable constitution without harm or prejudice to any community, section or class of the Indian people.
- 7 Oct. do. In connection with Local Government elections in Rangoon, the Burma People's Party issued manifesto stating that the policy of the party is the attainment of full responsible Self-Government for Burma as a separate unit within the British Commonwealth.
- 8 Oct. do. Express train bomb explosion near Manmad in Bombay Presidency.
- 11 Oct. do. Second landing of the Simon Commission in Bombay who left the same evening by a special train for Poona.  
Giving evidence before the Age of Consent Committee Mr. Amarnath Dutta said that an alien Government had no right to enforce social legislation. All social evils would end with the advent of Swaraj and India would be a paradise to live in.
- 12 Oct. do. Arrival of the Simon Commission at Poona—The city in complete Hartal and there were hostile demonstrations and continuous cries of "shame" and "Simon, go back" from a crowd of 10,000 people under the lead of Messrs. Nariman and N. C. Kelkar.
- 13 Oct. do. *The Delhi Provincial Political Conference met at Meerut under the Presidency of Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru.*  
The All Bengal Moslem Youngmen's Conference held in Calcutta under the presidency of Dr. Shahidulla resolved to banish communalism from the country and co-operate with the Hindus in spreading education among their community.  
At the Workers' and Peasants' Conference held at Meerut, Mr. K. N. Saigal, the President, gave a statistical account of the miseries of Indian labourers and workers and said that the Viceroy's pay meant food for 8,000 workes.
- 14 Oct. do. Prof. T. L. Vaswani's fascinating address at the Behar Students' Conference at Mathihari—"Youth is "Sakti; Build future on the ancient ideals of India."
- 15 Oct. do. First public sitting of the Simon Commission at Poona—Mr. Turner, Chief Secretary of the Bombay Government, examined.
- 18 Oct. do. Lord Birkenhead resigned Secretaryship of India and Viscount Peel appointed his successor.
- 22 Oct. do. Annual session of the Sikh League met at Gujranwala under the Presidency of Sardar Kharak Singh.
- 23 Oct. do. Bomb outrage at Lahore during the Dussorah celebration—3 died and 49 injured.
- 26 Oct. do. Death of the Hon'ble Mr. S. B. Das, a successful advocate, an honest politician and a distinguished member of the Government of India.  
Indian demonstration against Labour Party's betrayal at Limehouse, London.

- 27 Oct. '28 Assam Students' Conference held at Tezpur under the presidency of Mr. T. R. Phookan.  
 Agra Provincial Hindu Conference held at Etawah under the Presidency of Lala Lajpat Rai.  
 Sind Provincial Khilafat Conference held at Sukkur under the Presidency of Maulana Hussein Ahmad Sahib on this and the next two days, gave qualified support to the Nehru Report demanding reservation of seats in Moslem majorities.  
 U. P. Political Conference met at Jhansi under the Presidency of Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru.
- 29 Oct. do. Serious Hindu-Moslem riot at Kalipalayam, Dt. Tirupur—Trouble arose over the election of a Hindu Temple near a public well used by Mahomedans.
- 30 Oct. do. Arrival of the Simon Commission at Lahore—Mad orgey of police in indiscriminately assaulting Lala Lajpat Rai and other leaders of the boycott procession near the railway station.

## November 1928.

- 3 Nov. '28 The All-India Congress Committee meeting held in Delhi under the Presidency of Dr. Ansari—Mr. Iyengar's resolution on complete independence carried without any opposition.  
 The Independence for India League met in Delhi—Draft constitution and rules formed.
- 4 Nov. do. The U. P. Muslim All-Parties Conference held at Cawnpore under the Presidency of Maulana Shaukat Ali—The President condemned the Mahasabha activities and complained that the Hindus and their leaders had for some years past been unfair to the Moslem community.
- 17 Nov. do. Passing away of Lala Lajpat Rai. the true patriot and trusted servant of the people, at Lahore—Death was due to the beating he received at the hands of the police on the day of the arrival of the Simon Commission.  
 The Andhra Provincial Conference met at Nandyal under the Presidency of Mr. C. Doraiswamy Iyengar.
- 20 Nov. do. Presiding at a Political Conference at Mangalore, Mr. K. F. Nariman declared that the British Raj was originally based on the object of exploitation. It continues to-day, he said, on the same base motive and it will continue to be actuated by the same consideration so long as it continues in this land.
- 21 Nov. do. The annual general meeting of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee held in Calcutta on this and the next day under the Presidency of Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose.
- 26 Nov. do. Punjab Council—Nationalist members abstained from attending as a protest against Government attitude regarding the police assault which hastened Lala Lajpat Rai's death.  
 In the Commons, in reply to a Labourite question whether Earl Winterton would enquire into the circumstances of the death of Lala Lajpat Rai, the Under-Secretary refused to hold any further enquiry as no evidence had been produced to show that death was due to police blows.
- 29 Nov. do. Lala Lajpat Rai Day observed throughout India and glowing tributes were paid to the great patriot at public meetings held all over India on this solemn occasion.  
 Police attack on boycott processionists at Lucknow on the eve of the arrival of the Simon Commission—Pandits Jawaharlal Nehru and Govinda Ballabh Pant received lathi blows.

- 30 Nov. do. A number of Students were hurt in a clash at Lucknow where the students had gathered with black flags to "welcome" Sir John Simon and the members of the Commission. The Students refusing to move were charged by the Police and mounted sowars with batons injuring a large number including Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru.

## December 1928.

- 9 Dec. '28 The Seventeenth Behar Provincial Conference met at Patna under the Presidency of Mr. Anugraha Narayan Singh.
- 12 Dec. do. Serious riot in Bombay mill area—As a sequel to the faction fight between two rival labour camps there was a riot in mill area when police opened fire in which nine were killed and fifty injured.
- 13 Dec. do. Opening Day of the Winter Session of the U. P. Council—Mr. Chintamon's motion of censure on the police for indiscriminately assaulting boycott processionists at Lucknow carried.
- 14 Dec. do. Addressing the Annual Conference of the European Association Mr. Gavin Jones maintained that in any future Government in India, it would be unwise to transfer the police to the Central Government or a Minister responsible to the legislature.
- 16 Dec. do. Mr. I. P. Saunders, a European Police officer, shot dead at Lahore while leaving his office—Motive attributed to be political.
- 17 Dec. do. Annual meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce opened by the Viceroy in Calcutta.
- 18 Dec. do. As a rejoinder to the attack on European capitalists by Indian nationalists, Sir George Godfrey said at the closing session of the Associated Chambers of Commerce in Calcutta: "Let me say that we are not disposed meekly to hand over the rich prizes which we and our fathers, with so much risk, expenditure and labour, have created and developed to the benefit alike of the inhabitants of India, the Indian exchequer and ourselves."  
Ninth Session of the All-India Trade Union Congress held at Jharria under the Presidency of Mr. M. Daud.
- 20 Dec. do. Twenty arrests made in Lahore consisting of students and Congress workers in connection with the death of Mr. I. P. Saunders.  
The vast and beautiful Congress Exhibition organised by its able Secretary Mr. Nalini Ranjan Sarkar opened by Dr. Ansari on the Exhibition ground amidst a distinguished gathering.
- 21 Dec. do. Posters were found on the walls of Lahore city, purporting to be from the assassin of Mr. Saunders, offering a reward of Rs. 5,000 for his own apprehension in addition to any reward that might be offered by Government.  
Arrival Pt. Matilal Nehru, the President-Elect of the Congress, in Calcutta—Thirty-four white horses, ridden by picturesquely-garbed postillions in pink and green, hauled the flower-decked chariot in which Pt. Nehru rode through the streets of Calcutta to the Deshbandhunagar. A salute of 101 rockets was fired as the President-elect stepped out of his carriage and cheer upon cheer was given by his ardent followers both inside and outside the station and the streets.  
Meeting of the Bengal Provincial Khilafat Committee in Calcutta broken down by some rowdies who assaulted members and damaged books and papers of the Committee.  
First All-India Workers' and Peasants' Party Conference met in Calcutta under the Presidency of Mr. Sohan Singh.

- 22 Dec. '28 The Central Khilafat Committee, which met on this and the next three days in Calcutta, broke up amidst uproarious scenes. In an atmosphere of serenity and solemnity the All-Parties Convention met in Calcutta under the Presidency of Dr. Ansari.
- 23 Dec. do. The Bengal Muslim All-Parties Conference, held in Calcutta under the Presidency of Sir Abdur Rahim, urged Federal Dominion Status and unicameral legislation.
- 25 Dec. do. The All-India Khilafat Conference met in Calcutta under the Presidency of Maulana Mahomed Ali—The Maulana on his mission to Islamise the world.  
Third Session of the All-India Youth Congress held in Calcutta under the Presidency of Mr. K. F. Nariman.  
The All-India National Social Conference met in Calcutta under the Presidency of Mr. M. R. Jayakar.
- 26 Dec. do. Twentieth Session of the All-India Muslim League met in Calcutta under the Presidency of Maharaja of Mahmudabad and continued till the next 5 days. The League decided to boycott the All-Parties Muslim Conference held at Delhi.
- 27 Dec. do. First All-India Socialist Youth Congress held in Calcutta under the Presidency of Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru.  
The All-India Women's Social Conference met in Calcutta under the Presidency of H. H. The Junior Maharani of Travancore.
- 28 Dec. do. Fifteenth Session of the All-India Christian Conference held at Madras under the Presidency of Revd. J. C. Chatterjea.  
Second annual meeting of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce opened by H. E. the Viceroy in Calcutta.
- 29 Dec. do. Opening Day of the Indian National Congress in Calcutta under the Presidency of Pt. Matilal Nehru.
- 30 Dec. do. Second Day of the Congress—Labour demonstration of twenty thousand workers and peasants in the Congress pandal.  
Eleventh Session of the National Liberal Federation met at Allahabad under the Presidency of Sir Chimanlal Setalvad.  
The Hindusthan Sevadai Conference met in Calcutta under the Presidency of Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose.
- 31 Dec. do. Third Day of the Congress—"If you will help me and follow the programme I have suggested, honestly and intelligently, I promise that Swaraj will come within one year," declared Mahatma Gandhi in his final appeal to the Congress. The delegates adopted his compromise resolution in favour of Dominion Status. Mr. Bose's amendment demanding complete independence was rejected.  
The Muslim All-Parties Conference at Delhi under the Presidency of H. H. the Aga Khan.
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# The All India Spinners' Association.

## ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1926-27.

*The following are extracts from the annual report of the All-India Spinners' Association, for the year 1926-1927, issued from Ahmedabad :—*

The period under report is the second year of the Association's existence. The year may be said to be one of general progress. The progress is to be marked not so much in the increased figures of khadi production and sale although such progress is also to be found in some of the provinces, but rather in the improvement in the quality of yarn and cloth towards which the efforts of many of the organisations in the several provinces were, in the main, directed during a large part of the year, as also in the evolving of disciplined organisation in some of the less organised provinces and the bringing of all their centres under a proper system of business efficiency. Generally speaking, there is a wider recognition of the efficacy of the Charkha to solve one of the most important problems of economic India, viz, the enforced idleness of the peasantry for a large part of the year.

### GANDHIJI'S TOUR.

In spite of a severe breakdown in health, Mahatma Gandhi toured through many provinces and went through a strenuous programme of collection of funds and propaganda which has had the most beneficial results in stimulating interest in khadi and has given a considerable impetus to the movement in the provinces he visited. Apart from the funds collected and the increase in the demand for khadi, that usually accompanies his visit to any part of the country, there has been the more permanently beneficial result of removal of misapprehension as to the real nature and import of the khadi movement, bringing home to the mind of large numbers of people the true economics of the spinning-wheel and the consequent enlistment in favour of the charkha of the sympathies of large classes that had stood so far unaffected by the movement. In some provinces, as for instance, Behar and C. P., the ministers and officials made their contributions to the collections. Every one of the Indian princes whose territories Mahatma Gandhi visited showed the greatest hospitality and evinced great sympathy with the object of the movement and, while some of them made personal contributions to the khadi fund, others have even begun active steps in promoting the cause in their own States.

### FINANCIAL POSITION.

The total capital in the hands of the Association during the year under report was 20,35,599-4-0. We had mentioned in our last report some provinces whose assets had not been transferred to us. Of these the Association has this year taken over the assets of Burma and Karnatak, which are as under :—

Burma, Rs. 23,575-3-4 ; Karnatak, Rs. 13,989-6-4 ½.

Of the others, practically all the available assets in Sind have been realised and it only remains for the accounts to be closed. C. P. Hindi work has been, definitely closed and the assets are being realised. Andhra liquidation work, however, is still unfinished. Of the lakh and sixty thousand advanced to Andhra, only Rs. 98,096-3-3 had been realised up to the end of September. The rest lies in the form of outstanding debts, for the realisation of which steps are being taken.

### PRODUCTION AND SALE.

It would appear from a perusal of the figures that, while there has been a considerable progress in the sales, the production figures stand at very much the same level as in the last year. The progress in sales is indeed even more remarkable than would

appear at first sight. For while last year's figures involved some amount of duplication of account of inter-sales between organisations in the same province, this year the figures given represent absolutely net sales so far as provinces are concerned, although there is still the duplication due to inter-provincial sales.

But even as regards production there is more progress than one would imagine from a perusal of the figures. There is one factor to be considered in a comparison of the figures of the year under report with the previous. There has been a general reduction in the prices of khadi in several of the provinces, for example Tamil Nad, Andhra, Behar, Punjab, Ajmer and Bengal. The ruling prices in Tamil Nad during nine months of this year were about 7 to 8 per cent less than those of the previous year; in the case of Punjab, Ajmer and Andhra the reduction was 9 per cent while in Behar it was 10 per cent. If we take this into consideration it will be seen that the total production in the country has really increased by nearly two lakhs.

It must, however, be admitted that the progress in this respect ought to have been and was expected to be much larger. The shortage is due to the operation of factors, some of which at least could not be anticipated. The communal disturbances, which are poisoning the fountain of national life have not left even the khadi movement untouched. Bengal and Punjab where the disturbances have been the greatest have, it will be seen, recorded a decrease. The efforts made by the Khadi Pratisthan towards the improvement of the quality of yarn and of weaving had a temporary effect of reducing the production for some time. In Punjab, the private organisation at Batala did very little work this year and its output for the whole of the year amounted only to Rs. 3445 as against over 30,000 last year. The Guzerat fall is partly accounted for by the dislocation of the work caused by the floods in July last. The decline in Behar figures is explained by the fact that owing to shortage of liquid cash due to accumulation of stock in the beginning of the year, yarn sufficient to last for the slack season from April to June could not be previously stocked. The fall in these provinces this year has been more than made up by the progress of the other provinces, especially Ajmer, Tamil Nad, U. P. and Utkal.

#### PRICES.

While improvements are being effected in the quality of the goods, continuous efforts are also being made at the same time to reduce the prices of khadi. We have traced in our last year's report the fall in khadi prices since 1922 in some of the provinces. This year also there has been a general reduction of prices in many provinces. Ajmere has reduced the price of its standard price of 16 yards by 6 to 8 annas a yard. In Andhra the price of ordinary khadi has been reduced on an average by one anna per yard and that of fine khadi by two to four annas. Punjab has reduced the price of its standard cloth of 27" by 0-0-6 per yard. In Tamil Nad the prices were reduced by 7 to 8 per cent in January last, but owing to the abnormal rise of cotton prices at Tirupur, in September, the price of khadi had to be raised to the level of last year.

#### MUNICIPALITIES AND LOCAL BOARDS.

Before concluding the report it is necessary to refer to two matters. In the two previous reports mention was made of a number of municipalities and other local bodies that have evinced interest in the movement. It is now found that some of the bodies mentioned in our last report have not been able to put their resolutions into effect. Principally has this been the case in regard to the removal of octroi on khadi, which requires the sanction of the local government concerned. In the Mysore State most municipalities have exempted khadi from octroi duty. Some of the bodies in Madras could not give effect to their resolution to introduce spinning in their schools because of the G. O. which was in full force till recently prohibiting the introduction of spinning except where facilities for weaving also are provided. In Behar although at first the Local Government accepted the Legislative Council resolution in favour of the introduction of spinning in schools their later explanation on the subject has practically nullified the resolution and discountenanced the efforts started by several of the local bodies in this matter. Regarding the use of khadi for municipal and board purpose from the information received it is found that the resolutions passed by the bodies in this respect are in most cases recommendatory. Only a few of the bodies



mentioned in Appendix F to our last report have sent any precise information in this respect in answer to our inquiries.

Of the local bodies that come to our notice this year as taking keen interest in the khadi movement special mention must be made about the municipality of Chanda in C. P. This municipality has been giving a yearly grant of Rs. 500 for khadi production in the town of Chanda since 1922 and uses only pure khaddar for the uniforms of its employees. It has also recently resolved to exempt hand-spun and hand-woven khadi from octroi. The resolution is awaiting the sanction of the Local Government. The District Board of Belgaum may also be mentioned in this place. It has sanctioned a grant of Rs. 500 to develop khadi in famine areas of the district.

#### SPINNING IN SCHOOLS.

Of the several bodies that have introduced spinning in their schools the Bezwada Municipality from the information available, shows the best record of progress. The Municipality has this year introduced taklis in addition to charkhas and the report states there is a good deal of improvement both in quality and the quantity of the yarn produced. Of the others the work done by the Municipalities of Guntur, Tirupati, Lucknow, Berhampur, Ahmedabad, and the District Boards of Muzaffarpore, Balasore and Saran may be mentioned as showing promising result. Madras, Nellore and few others have made a beginning. The Nellore Municipality specially is showing considerable interest in the matter. It has sanctioned Rs. 1,000 as expenses for introducing spinning in all its 30 elementary schools and has also sanctioned a further sum of Rs. 1,000 for the introduction of khadi weaving in its middle-schools. It may also be noted that this municipality is using khadi for the uniforms of its employees and for the use of the in-patients in the Ghosa Hospital conducted by it. The Allahabad Municipality and the Benares Municipality, which have been showing a good record in this respect during the last two years, have not supplied us with their reports for the year.

#### INDIAN STATES.

The other matter that needs mention is the increasing interest that is evinced by some of the States. The Chief of Sawantwadi and the Royal Family of Cochin made personal contributions to the Khadi Fund on the occasion of Mahatmaji's visit to their territories. But there have been more permanent results also. Sawantwadi and Gwalior have introduced spinning in their schools. Sawantwadi has also sanctioned a grant towards the expenses of an experimental production centre that has been started at Kamler. Mysore has begun production in right earnest under direct management and has borrowed the services of an experienced worker from the Association for organising the work. The Khadi Exhibition at Bangalore, organised by the Association in July, which furnished valuable lessons and created the proper atmosphere was helped with a grant from the State. Its Department of Industries is running a khadi production centre at Badanval, 20 miles from Mysore city, and it is reported to be a very successful experiment and the Government is intending to increase the allotment in order to further expand the work. If all the Indian States can be persuaded to follow the example of Mysore and take active steps in the promotion of this movement, a wide field for khadi activity will be opened and result of far-reaching importance can easily be achieved before many years are over.

#### CONCLUSION.

Looking to the history of the movement since its inception and the progress made so far, it may now be said with a measure of confidence that the charka has gained a secure footing in the country. Very few indeed are now found to deny that the spinning wheel has a real place in the national life and economy of India at least in the immediate future. No one who has ever argued against the charka has been able to put forward in its place any other supplementary occupation which can be immediately taken up by the millions of the country, will serve the object in view and promise result of at least equal magnitude in the near future. If, indeed, as Dr. Mann of the Bombay Agricultural Department recently declared, the empty stomach is the greatest obstacle to progress in India, the khadi movement which is intended to

give a supplementary occupation to semi-starved peasant families must appeal to all the patriotic devotion in the country. There is indeed a distinct movement of opinion in favour of khadi. But any large progress in the work itself will depend upon the capital that the country can place at the disposal of the cause. The statement at the end of the last year's report that the Association's financial position has got to be strengthened if it is to extend in any appreciable degree its activities in the coming year's remain equally true to-day; for indeed we have barely touched the fringe of the problem. Above all more and more of private capital and enterprise should flow into the movement. It is true that khadi will yield but a very limited profit. But surely there must be enough people in this country who realise the importance, from at least the economic and the humanitarian point of view of the charkah movement and will be content with a small profit in the service of the toiling millions of the land. There is no doubt that these ends will be achieved if those in the country who are more fortunately circumstanced by reason of wealth or education realise their duty by the country and especially the poverty-stricken mass of the population. If the active and steady support of politically minded India can be assured for some more years at least to this movement which Mahatma Gandhi has called the "one true national Yagna" to-day, it will not be long before the essential objects of the movement are realised. It can be safely asserted that the measure of time will be in exact accordance with the measure of such support.

### The Revised Constitution.

The Draft Constitution, proposed by Seth Jamnalal Bajaj, Sjt. C. Rajagopalachariar, and Babu Rajendra Prasad for the All-India Spinners' Association, which was circulated amongst the members of the Executive Council of the Association and was also published in the papers, was considered by the Council of the Association at its meeting held at Wardha on the 18th and 19th December 1928 and was finally adopted with slight amendments. The following is the amended Constitution of the All-India Spinners' Association :—

1. Whereas the time has arrived for the establishment of an expert organisation for the development of hand-spinning and khaddar and whereas experience has shown that such development is not possible without a permanent organisation, unaffected and uncontrolled by politics, political changes or political bodies, an organisation called "The All-India Spinners' Association" is hereby established with the consent of the All-India Congress Committee, as an integral part of the Congress organisation, but with independent existence and powers.

2. (a) The said Association shall consist of members and associates and donors hereinafter defined and shall have a Board of Trustees who shall also be the Governing body of the Association.

(b) That the said Board of Trustees and Executive Council shall consist of the undermentioned twelve persons who shall hold office for life, provided they continue to be A class members of the Association, and three other persons who shall hold office for one year elected annually by the members of the Association from among its A class members provided that for this purpose no one who has not been on the rolls continuously for two years at the time of election shall be entitled to vote.

Names of members of the Board of Trustees and Executive Council :—(1) Mahatma Gandhi ; (2) Seth Jamnalal Bajaj ; (3) Sjt. C. Rajagopalachari ; (4) Sjt. Gangadhar Rao Deshpande ; (5) Sjt. Konda Venkatappayya ; (6) Sjt. Vallabhbhai Patel ; (7) Sjt. Jawaharlal Nehru ; (8) Sjt. Manilal Kothari ; (9) Sjt. Satis Chandra Das Gupta ; (10) Babu Rajendra Prasad ; (11) Sjt. S. G. Banker ; and (12) (kept vacant).

### FINANCE

3. That the funds and assets now held by the All-India Spinners' Association and its various branches shall vest in the Board of Trustees who shall also be the Executive Council of the Association, and they shall hold the same for the purposes of the Association.

4. The Council shall have the right to raise loans, to collect subscriptions, to hold immovable property, to invest funds under proper security, to give and make mortgages for the furtherance of hand-spinning and khaddar, to give financial assistance to khaddar organisations by way of loans, gifts, or bounties, to hold or establish schools or institutions where hand-spinning is taught, to help or open khaddar stores, to establish a Khaddar Service, to act as agency on behalf of the Congress to receive self-spun yarn as subscription to the Congress and to issue certificates, and to do all the things that may be considered necessary for the furtherance of its objects, with power to make regulations for the conduct of affairs of the Association or the Council and to make such amendments in the present constitution, as may be considered necessary from time to time.

5. Any vacancy in the Board of Trustees and Executive Council occurring by reasons of resignation, death or otherwise, shall be filled up by the remaining members from amongst A class members of the Association, provided however the person appointed in place of life member shall be a member for life while the person appointed in place of a member elected for the year shall be a member for the remaining period of the term.

6. Four members shall form the quorum for a meeting of the Board of Trustees and Executive Council.

7. All decisions shall be taken by a majority of votes.

8. The Council shall keep an accurate account of all subscriptions, donations and fees, whether in cash or kind, and of expenditure. The books shall be open to public inspection and shall be audited by competent auditors every 3 months.

9. The Board of Trustees and Executive Council shall have a central office. They shall elect a Secretary and Treasurer from among their number who shall each hold office for . . . years.

10. All persons desirous of becoming members of the Congress shall send their yarn subscriptions to the Central Office with particulars in the following form :

To the Secretary, All-India Spinners' Association.

Sir,—I enclose herewith . . . yards of yarn . . . in weight spun by me, being my subscription to the National Congress. I am I wish to become a member of the . . . \*Congress Committee. My age is . . . My occupation is . . . My address is . . .

Date . . . . .

Signature...

(Please sign legibly and if a woman, state whether married or unmarried )

\*Give name of the Congress Committee.

11. Upon receipt of the subscription the Secretary shall examine the quantity and quality of yarn and if found satisfactory shall send to the Congress Committee concerned a certificate in the following form :

"This is to certify that.....of.....has sent to the A. I. S. A.....yards of yarn being subscription for membership of the Congress for the year.....in..... Congress Committee of.....P. C. C."

A duplicate of the certificate with signature of the Secretary shall be sent to the sender of the yarn.

12. The Central Office shall keep a separate ledger containing a list with full particulars of all yarn received by the A. I. S. A. for membership of life Congress.

#### MEMBERSHIP

13. There shall be two classes of members of the Association, A and B :—

(i) The A class shall consist of persons above eighteen years of age and habitually wearing khaddar who deposit regularly from month to month with the treasurer or any agency duly appointed thereto by the Council 1,000 yards of self-spun yarn, well twisted and uniform.

(ii) The B class shall consist of persons above eighteen years of age, habitually wearing khadar, who pay an annual subscription of 2,000 yards of self-spun yarn, well twisted and uniform.

14. Any yarn paid to the Association for membership of the National Congress shall be considered part of the subscription to the Association.

15. The duty of every member, both A and B classes, shall be to carry on propaganda for hand-spinning and khaddar.

16. When in any area fifty members have been enrolled they may elect from among the members of class A, an advisory committee of five, to advise the Council about matters relating to the area.

17. Those who pay the All-India Spinners' Association Rs. 12 per year in advance and habitually wear khaddar shall be entitled to be enrolled as associate members of the Association.

18. Any person who wears khaddar habitually and pays in advance a consolidated amount of Rs. 500 shall become a Life Associate of the Association.

19. All Associates will be entitled to receive, free of charge, copies of state ments, balance-sheets and minutes of proceedings of the Council.

20. Every person wishing to join the Association shall apply in the following form :—

To the Secretary, All-India Spinners' Association,.....

Dear Sir,—I have read the rules of the A. I. S. A. I desire to become a member of class I an associate.....and I forward herewith.....as my subscription for.....

Please enroll me as a member of Class I an associate.

Date,.....

(Signature and full address)

21. If any member fails to send his yarn quota for six months consecutively he shall cease to be a member.

## The All India Congress Committee.

### ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1928.

The following is the full text of the annual report for 1928 presented by the General Secretaries, Sj. Subhas Chandra Bose and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to the All-India Congress Committee :

The hand of death has fallen heavily on the country and the congress during the year under report. Hardly had the Madras Sessions of the Congress ended when news came of the death of an ex-president, the loved and respected Hakim Ajmal Khan, than whom no one had laboured more for the removal of distrust and friction between Hindus and Muslims. Later in the year another ex-president, Lord Sinha, passed away, and on the 17th of November the whole country was shocked and deeply grieved to learn of the sudden death of the third ex-president, Lala Lajpat Rai. The tragedy of Lalaji's death was all the more felt and resented because it followed a wanton and unprovoked police assault on his person, which according to his doctors, hastened the end.

Among other national workers who have passed away were Andhraratna Gopalakrishnayya, at one time General Secretary of the Congress and the hero of the Chirala Perala Satyagraha in 1921 ; Shri Gopabandhu Das, the selfless leader of Utkal ; Shri Maganlal Gandhi, who laboured like none other in his quiet and unassuming way for the 'charkha' and hand-spinning ; and Shri Anandi Prasad Sinha.

The three outstanding events of the year have been the Bardoli Satyagraha, the boycott of the Simon Commission, and the All-Parties' Conference and Committees, to draft a constitution for India in compliance with a resolution of the Madras Congress.

#### BARDOLI.

The Bardoli Satyagraha movement organised by the peasantry of Bardoli Taluq, under the able leadership of Sri Vallabhbhai Patel, was a remarkable example of the efficacy of well organised, peaceful resistance to official oppression and violence. The peasants objected to the reassessment of the Taluq and declared that it had been carried out without any proper investigation, and was in fact utterly at variance with existing conditions. Their protests and petitions were however ignored and their request

for an enquiry was refused. Having exhausted all gentler methods of persuasion they started Satyagraha and refused to pay any revenue. Methods of terrorism were resorted to and land and cattle were sold for ridiculous prices. But the peasantry held together and refused to be cowed down into submission. They succeeded ultimately in making their organised strength felt and the government had to yield to their demand for an enquiry. The enquiry is still being held.

The Bardoli Satyagraha was not merely a local struggle for a local grievance. The whole question of an arbitrary system of land assessment was raised by it and hence the interest in it was nation wide. Every zamindar and 'Kisan' was affected by it, and the Satyagraha, ending in the victory of the peasantry, was hailed with joy by the peasantry all over the country. As the enquiry is still proceeding it cannot be said that the question is settled. But whatever the ultimate issue of this enquiry may be the organised and peaceful courage of the Bardoli peasantry has had a great effect on the 'Kisans' all over the country.

#### SIMON COMMISSION.

The Madras Congress called upon the country to boycott completely the Statutory Commission, known commonly as the Simon Commission. A large number of other organisations in the country joined in this boycott. The working committee, in co-operation with other organisations, declared a hartal for February 3rd, the day the Commission was to land in Bombay. This hartal was observed all over the country and monster meetings were held. Successful hartals have also been held in the cities visited by the Commission.

The Legislative Assembly and some Provincial Councils also joined in the boycott and refused to cooperate with the Commission. Some Provincial Councils, largely with the help of official and nominated members declared for co-operation. The elected members of all the Councils, however, have almost solidly stood for the boycott.

The boycott of the Commission has continued and has been intensified during their second visit to India. In spite of the tortuous manoeuvres and tactics of the Chairman of the Commission and his transparent attempts to carry on propaganda for himself and his colleagues, and in spite of all manner of official pressure and duress, the boycott has stiffened and has demonstrated to the world that India will have nothing to do with the Commission.

#### AT LAHORE.

The great success of boycott induced the Government to try methods of coercion and terrorism. In Lahore a vast gathering of people, headed by Lala Lajpat Rai, met to demonstrate against the Commission, was assaulted by the policemen and many respected leaders were injured by baton blows. Lala Lajpat Rai was one of the 'sufferers' and it is probable that his death was hastened by this cowardly assault. But in spite of this charge being made openly an impartial enquiry was denied by Government.

#### AT LUCKNOW.

Lucknow experienced several wanon and unprovoked police charges on the unarmed and peaceful gatherings on the occasion of the visit of the Commission. Mounted and foot police displayed their skill with the baton and the 'lathi' on the heads and backs of well-known public workers of all parties and injured scores of people.

Lucknow was converted into an armed camp with thousands of mounted and foot police and on four days there were brutal attacks by the police. Private houses were invaded by the police and respected national workers were beaten and arrested there for daring to call out 'Simon, Go Back'. The citizens of Lucknow, however, refused to be cowed down by these brutalities and increased their demonstrations. They even added a touch of humour to them and set the whole city laughing at the discomfiture of the authorities. During a party given by some taluquaders to the Simon Commission, the Kaiserbagh was surrounded by thousands of police and no one who was suspected of being a boycotter was allowed to approach even the public roads near the Bagh. In spite of those precautions the harmony of the party was marred by the arrival from the skies of numerous black kites and balloons bearing the legends "Simon, Go Back," "India for Indians", etc.

The events of Lucknow make it clear that the authorities in the United Provinces at least are modelling themselves on the old Punjab model and Haileyism is coming to mean much the same thing as O'Dwyerism. O'Dwyerism was followed by non-co-operation and the greatest national awakening of modern times in India. That awakening shook the fabric of British rule. India is different to-day from what it was nine years ago and Haileyism is likely to lead to an even greater national response which may carry us to our goal.

The tremendous success of the boycott can be measured by these methods of terrorism adopted by the authorities. But as was to be expected these methods have served to increase the intensity of the boycott. They have resulted in the decision by the nationalist press not to publish the proceedings of the Commission; and proposals have been made to organise a social boycott of all officials, British and Indian, who take active part in wanton assaults on the public, and also of all those who in defiance of the will of the nation, co-operate with and give entertainments to the Commission.

### SWARAJ CONSTITUTION.

The Madras Congress authorised the Working Committee to prepare a Swaraj Constitution, based on a Declaration of Rights, in co-operation with other parties. Representatives of other organisations were invited and the All-Parties Conference was held in Delhi in February, in Bombay in May and in Lucknow in August. It was not possible, as laid down in the congress resolution, to convene a special Convention in March. The work of drafting a constitution proved more arduous than was perhaps expected, chiefly because of the difficulty of reconciling conflicting claims. Ultimately a Committee, with Pandit Motilal Nehru as chairman, was appointed to determine the principles of the constitution. This Committee produced a report, which has come to be popularly known as the "Nehru Report", which attracted a great deal of attention in India and elsewhere. The Committee have in their report dealt very ably and skilfully with the communal problem and have succeeded in producing a solution which has met with a very large measure of approval all over the country.

The constitution drafted in the Report was based on the model of the dominions. This, it was urged by many Congressmen, was contrary to the Congress goal of Independence. It was stated, however, that the Congress goal remained unaffected, and the Report and the All-Parties Conference decision only stated the largest measure of common agreement between various group and organisations in the country. Many Reports, based on the model of country made this clear by declaring that they accepted the Report subject to the Congress goal of independence. The All-India Congress Committee at their meeting held in Delhi on November 3rd considered the Report and the All-Parties decisions. While welcoming the Report as a large step in advance, and specially endorsing the solution of the communal problems in it, the Committee declared that the Congress stood for independence. It was further made clear that independence meant severance from the British Empire.

The publication of the All Parties Report gave rise to the controversy between those who favoured independence and those who were prepared to accept dominion status. Many Congressmen, who did not wish the ideal of independence to be toned down in any way, started a new organisation called the Independence for India League. This League is confined to members of the Congress and has for its objects not only independence for the country but also the reconstruction of Indian society on the basis of social and economic equality.

The Special Convention, which according to the resolution of the Madras Congress, was to have been held in March last, is now proposed to be held in Calcutta just before the Congress sessions.

The ordinary work of the Congress was somewhat over-shadowed during the year by the All-Parties Conferences. There were few meetings of the A. I. C. C. and the Working Committee. Apart from the meeting held in Madras just after the Congress sessions there was only one other meeting of the A. I. C. C. which was held in Delhi on November, 3rd and 4th. The Working Committee has so far met on five occasions at Benares, Delhi, Bombay, Lucknow and again at Delhi, besides the meeting held at Madras soon after the Congress.

The Madras Congress in pursuance of the boycott of the Simon Commission, restricted the work inside the Legislative Councils to a minimum. Difficulties, however, were experienced in carrying out this direction and the secretaries regret to say that it was more honoured in the breach than in the observance. Ultimately the Working Committee recommended to the A.I.C.C. to give greater freedom to members of the Assembly and the Provincial Councils. The A.I.C.C. accepted the recommendation of the Working Committee.

#### TRADES DISPUTES BILL.

The Government attempted in the course of the year to rush through the Assembly and place on the Statute Book various repressive measures, in particular the Trades Disputes Bill and the Public Safety (Removal from India) Bill. The Working Committee directed the Congress Party in the Assembly to oppose those measures and they succeeded, in co-operation with other groups, in having a tie in the voting on the Public Safety Bill. The President of the Assembly gave his casting vote against the measure which was thus rejected. The Trades Disputes Bill has been referred to a committee. The two measures are likely to come up again before the Assembly. They aim at strangling the young Trade Union movement in India and at preventing all outsiders, who are not approved of by the Government, from entering India. They will have to be strenuously opposed.

#### WAR DANGER.

The resolution of the Madras Congress on War danger attracted considerable attention in India and foreign countries. Most Provincial Conferences repeated it and called upon the people to be prepared for this danger and to follow the lead given by the Congress in case a crisis arose. Reports of war preparation in India continue to come and it is apparent that every effort is being made to be ready for war. The situation in Europe appears to be getting worse specially since the recent Anglo-French Pact and a conflict may be precipitated at any moment. It is desirable for the Congress to watch developments so that if a crisis comes it may be ready to give the right lead.

#### LEAGUE AGAINST IMPERIALISM.

The office of the A. I. C. C. has remained in constant touch during the year with the headquarters of the League against Imperialism in Berlin. The League has helped the A. I. C. C. office to keep in touch with nationalist, labour and progressive movement in other countries, and has carried on propaganda for the freedom of India, in Europe and elsewhere. The League is getting more affiliations from representative nationalist and labour organisations in Europe, America, Asia and Africa and is becoming a powerful centre for anti-imperialist activities. The League has decided to hold its second World Congress in July next year in Paris and has invited the National Congress to send representatives. The invitation will be considered by the Subjects Committee in Calcutta.

#### YOUTH LEAGUES.

An outstanding feature of the year has been the rise of the Youth movement in the country. Youth Leagues and students' organisations have been formed all over the country and are specially strong in Bombay and Bengal. Delegates were sent by some of those organisations to the World Youth Congress held at Erede in Holland in August last. Young men have also taken a very prominent part in the Simon boycott demonstrations. In Lucknow they were the chief sufferers.

A Committee appointed by the A. I. C. C. to report on the revision of the Congress Constitution has made certain recommendations which have been referred to the Subjects Committee. The Committee has laid special stress on having a permanent office and a permanent staff. The secretaries feel that unless this is done it will be difficult to carry on Congress work with any efficiency or effectiveness. The Committee further recommended that the Congress should be prepared to affiliate other organisations which accept the objects of the Congress.

The Working Committee has decided to appoint research scholars to carry on research work on behalf of the Congress. This is an important decision which will be of great help in bringing together useful information on public questions and at the

same time in training competent young men for national service. But research work can only be done properly in a permanent office with a good library attached to it.

#### A. I. SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION.

The All-India Spinners' Association have been carrying on their good work with vigour and energy and are consolidating their position and extending the scope of their activities. Complete figures for the year are not yet available but from the information so far received, the value of production amounted to Rs. 23,75,757 and of sale to Rs. 32,22,122. At present there are 170 centres of production and 322 sale depots. The members on the rolls are 1527 of the A. class and 279 of the B. class. Of these 221 are also members of the Congress. Besides, the Association has enrolled 205 Juveniles.

The Hindustani Seva Dal have started a physical culture institute at Bagalkot in the Karnatak. They have held several training camps in various parts of the country and they have added to their reputation for doing thorough work. It is unfortunate that Provincial Congress Committees do not encourage them as much as they might and so help in building up a well-trained and efficient All-India Volunteer Corps. In Karnatak province alone they enrolled 4706 members of the Congress.

#### STRIKES AND LOCKOUTS.

The year 1928 stands out as a year of grave and unprecedented industrial trouble. Strikes and lockouts have followed each other in quick succession and have often been followed by police attacks and firing on strikers. Of the many important strikes the chief one was the strike of the Bombay textile workers who showed wonderful solidarity and tenacity in continuing the strike for six months in spite of hunger and every kind of pressure from the employers and the Government. The Government resorted on many occasions to firing on the strikers. The industrial troubles and strikes have stiffened the trade union movement and have given it a more militant outlook. The condition of the workers is so utterly bad that industrial troubles are bound to continue, specially as attempts are being made on behalf of the employers to reduce even their pre-  
sented deplorable standard of living.

It has been repeatedly pointed out that the A. I. C. C. has no permanent fund or sufficient income. It is not possible to carry on our activities for long on collections made in past years. The only two regular sources of income now are from Congress delegates fees and A.I.C.C. membership dues. These may bring in a sum of about Rs. 4,000 per annum. The constitution Committee has laid stress on the Congress taking early steps to increase this regular income. An increase in the delegation fee to at least Rs. 5 is a desirable change.

The financial position of the A. I. C. C. would be considerably improved if the many outstandings were paid up. It is very unfortunate, that Provincial Congress Committees and individual Congress men should not pay the A.I.C.C. the moneys due to it. We attach to this report a list of outstandings. We should specially draw attention to the following sums due from Provincial Congress Committees; Bengal Rs. 1,39,003; Bombay Rs. 43,892, Sind Rs. 1,9672; Punjab Rs. 8,412; Tamil Nad Rs. 3,335. The Bengal P.C.C. has never paid any part of its T.S.F. collections to the A.I.C.C. Bombay on the other hand has made generous contributions to other provinces and has also paid substantial sums to the A. I. C. C. But there appears to be no reason why the amount now due from it should not be paid up. The Tamil Nad P. C. C. has a large surplus in hand from the last Congress and can easily pay.

Among the individuals who owe large sums to the A. I. C. C. we might mention Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and Mr. M. R. Jayakar, both of whom hold balances from the Punjab Relief Funds. Pandit Malaviya has fixed deposit receipts for Rs. 48,842. He agreed to transfer these receipts to the A. I. C. C. three years ago but unfortunately he has not done so yet. Mr. M. R. Jayakar has paid part of the balance with him but he has made no further payment for the last three years.

We should like to express our indebtedness to all our colleagues in the office of the A. I. C. C. for the earnestness and efficiency with which they have carried on the work of the office. We would specially like to express our gratitude to Shri B. Raja Rau, the Under Secretary, on whom the burden of the day to day work of the office



has largely fallen. We would like to mention that Mr. Raja Rau was entitled to an increment in his salary of Rs. 25 per month from March 1928. Mr. Raja Rau, however, waived his right to this increment for the year.

The Working Secretary desires to express his own indebtedness to Mr. Raja Rau and his other colleagues in the office for the uniform courtesy and co-operation which he received from them. The work of the All-Parties Report put a heavy strain on the office staff. But whatever the work happened to be there was always a willing response.

Our colleague Mr. Shuaib Qureshi left India for Europe in September last. He is thus unable to sign this report.

## Proceedings of the Delhi Meeting

The Working Committee's resolution on the Lucknow decisions of the All-Parties Conference, accepting the Nehru Report as a great step towards political advance but declaring complete Independence to be the goal of the Indian people, was the main item for discussion by the All-India Congress Committee, which met on the 3rd NOVEMBER 1928, and continued till the next day in a specially erected shamiana at Dr. Ansari's residence, Delhi.

About seventy members were present, when the proceedings commenced.

By three o'clock the attendance of members improved considerably. Prominent among those who attended the meeting were Pandit Motilal Nehru, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Babu Shivaprasad, Mr. Govind Ballabh Pant, Messrs. C. D. Pande. and Narendra Dev, from the U.P., Dr. Annie Besant, Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar, Mr. S. Satyamurti, and Mr. C. Vijayaraghavachari from Madras, Mr. Jannadas from Bombay, Mr. Sen Gupta, Mr. Subash Chandra Bose, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Dr. B. C. Roy and Babu Bhupendra Dutt from Bengal; Lala Lajpat Rai, Dr. Satyapal, Mr. Kedarnath Saigal, Sardar Mangal Singh and Lala Dunichand from the Punjab; Dr. B. S. Moonji and Mr. Abhyannkar from the C. P.; and Mr. M. S. Aney from Berar.

### 1. The Condolence Resolution.

The following resolution of condolence was passed, the whole house standing in silence :—

"This Committee expresses its deep regret at the deaths of Syts. Anandi Prasad Sinha, Maganlal Gandhi, Andhraratna Gopalkrishnayya and Pandit Gopabandhu Das, and places on record its appreciation of the services they rendered to the cause of national freedom."

### 2. The Police Assault.

On the motion of Mr. S. Satyamurti (Tamil Nadu) seconded by Dr. B. C. Roy (Bengal) the following resolution was adopted unanimously :—

"This Committee expresses its strong resentment at the wanton, brutal and cowardly attack by the police on unarmed peaceful people in Lahore and offers its respectful congratulations to Lala Lajpat Rai, Maulana Daud Ghaznavi, Drs. Alam, Satyapal and Gopichand, Mr. Suri, Lala Hansraj and others for their facing fearlessly and peacefully the assaults of the police."

Lala Lajpat Rai thanked the Committee on behalf of himself and others mentioned in the foregoing resolution.

### 3. Poet Bharati's Songs.

Mr. Satyamurti then moved the following resolution which was seconded by Mr. Basheer Ahmad Sayeed (Tamil Nadu) and adopted by the Committee :—

"The All India Congress Committee condemns the action of the Madras Government in having forfeited 2,000 copies of the late C. Subramanya Bharati's national and other songs and appeals to all the people in Tamil Nadu to popularise his songs and thus answer the challenge of the Government."

#### 4. The Nehru Report.

Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar (ex-officio) moved the following resolution, Mr. J. M. Sen-Gupta (Bengal) seconding :—

"(i) This meeting of the A. I. C. C. adheres to the decision of the Madras Congress declaring complete independence to be the goal of the Indian people and is of opinion that there can be no true freedom till the British connection is severed.

"(ii) This Committee accepts the recommendations of the Nehru Committee as agreed to by the Lucknow All Parties Conference for the settlement of the communal difference.

"(iii) This Committee cordially congratulates the Nehru Committee for their labours, patriotism and far-sightedness and without prejudice to the resolution of the Congress relating to complete independence, is of opinion that the recommendations of the Nehru Committee are a great step towards political advance and, without committing itself to every detail, generally approves of them."

Mr. IYENGAR, moving the resolution, said that it reaffirmed the Lucknow Conference resolution and made it absolutely clear that there could be no real independence till the British connection was severed. The resolution removed the last vestige of ambiguity that surrounded the Lucknow resolution. The independence resolution was not sprung upon the Madras Congress. It was before the country before that, and even at the Madras Congress there were only two persons who were opposed to it. Dr. Besant and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya were not opposed to it in the Subjects Committee of the Madras Congress. The Nehru Committee admitted in their report that by adopting Dominion Status they did not in any way tone down the demand of the Congress for complete Independence. At the Conference held at Meerut Dr. Ansari himself supported Independence and also the U. P. Political Conference last week. The resolution before them was practically the same as the Jhansi resolution. Imperialism was what they were fighting and Dominion Status meant the acceptance and perpetuation of Imperialism.

Dr. Besant intervening asked : Do you make the goal of Independence obligatory on all Congressmen and shut out Dominion Status ?

Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar replied : "It is open to individual Congressmen to advocate Dominion Status. The Independence resolution is binding on all Congress organisations and their executives, but does not bind anybody who even as a member of the organisation, wants to advocate Dominion Status in his own capacity.

Proceeding Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar said that the resolution placed before the Committee was unanimously adopted by the Working Committee where there was perfect agreement. Undoubtedly, they all wanted the unity of all political parties, but Congress unity was more paramount and essential. He had nothing to gain or lose. Barring this one point of Independence or Dominion Status, he agreed with every word of the Nehru Report. He indignantly repudiated any suggestion emanating from any person, however high placed, or any motive ascribed to him on the alleged ground that he was against the Nehru Report. He flung the charge back as unworthy of being entertained in the case of an ex-President of the Congress. He trusted that he would not be misunderstood at least in the future.

Mr. J. M. SEN GUPTA said that the Madras Congress had led the way to the whole country to pursue a policy for the attainment of political freedom. When the Nehru Report adopted Dominion Status, it never meant, as was made clear by Mr. Subash Chandra Bose recently, that the Congress Executive ever slid its goal towards Dominion Status. Unfortunately Pandit Motilal was not present here just at this moment, but Mr. Sen Gupta said that there was no one keener on getting independence than the President-elect of the Calcutta Congress. The Congress had been absolutely steadfast, from the Madras Congress onwards, to the ideal of Independence, and no Congress leader, at any time, ever hinted at lowering the ideal. But it was only for the sake of political unity that the All-Parties' Committee embodied Dominion Status in the report, and that too, as was clearly emphasised by the Madras Congress resolution itself, "having regard to the general desire of all parties." The biggest thing achieved was political and communal unity and the formulation of a united demand at this crisis.

"I am wholeheartedly for the Congress not lowering its goal," concluded Mr. Sen Gupta. He added "The Congress is the strongest and biggest political organisation, and but for the Congress and its leaders, the country cannot go on or go forward towards the goal of independence. That is why I say that when the Congress has led, and is still leading and when the Congress organisations are vigorous and virile, independence leagues need not be formed, for the Congress itself is a League for Independence."

#### {DR. BESANT'S AMENDMENT

The first amendment to the resolution was moved by Dr. Annie Besant who urged the deletion of the words "that there can be no freedom till the British connection was severed." She said that personally she believed in declaring Independence, when India was ready to take it. She refused to be a 'party to the declaration of Independence and then going exactly on the lines of dependence. How could India proclaim Independence, when for the military and naval protection India depended on Great Britain? "As Lokamanya Tilak put it, if you are given 12 annas instead of Re. 1, take the twelve annas, and use it to get the other four annas" said Dr. Besant, and added: "I want Dominion Status, because it is possible to get it easily and quickly, and because it makes us independent within our own territories. You have in the Nehru Report a large measure of agreement and achievement of unity, which is of enormous service to the country. Independence is not attainable until we have the army and navy under our control. But the Congress at Madras has adopted it, and it is legitimate to strive for that ideal. But to say in the resolution here that true freedom can be had only by severance of the British connection is going beyond the Congress resolution, and we in a committee of representatives cannot strike out a new policy."

Concluding, Dr. Besant criticised the policy pursued by Sir Basil Blackett when he was in charge of Indian finances who decided all matters in favour of Britain. When India was free she would have a friendly alliance with Britain. As regards the Nehru Report, she pointed out that it did not contain the individual opinion of the members but the greatest common measure that could be found. To reject the report would be a fatal step for the Congress to take. As for the Independence cry of Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar and others, Dr. Besant drew attention to the constitutions framed by Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar, Mr. C. Vijiaraghavachari and others which had accepted Dominion Status as the goal.

#### MR. HAMEED KHAN'S AMENDMENT

Mr. Abdul Hameed Khan, (Madras) moved an amendment seeking to omit part two of the resolution which accepted the recommendations of the Nehru Committee for settlement of communal differences. He also moved for the deletion of the last portion of the resolution which characterised the Nehru Report as a great step towards political advance.

Mr. Basheer Ahmed, (Madras), seconding the motion, said that it would be improper for the A. I. C. C. to accept the recommendations for the solution of the communal problem until the opinion of the Moslem League and the Khilafat Committee was available. He mentioned that the All-Parties Conference in Madras did not invite the Moslem League, the Khilafat Committee, the Justice Party and other organisations, and it had no right to call itself by that name.

#### LALA DUNICHAND'S AMENDMENT

Lala Dunichand sought to amend the whole resolution with a proviso that the Congress Committee entirely disapproved of the activities of some members which were calculated to strengthen the bureaucratic and reactionary elements in the country.

Lala Dunichand cited the instances of some leaders who, on the plea of Complete Independence, were passing resolutions against the Nehru Report with the help of Government supporters. Neither Islam, Hinduism nor Sikhism was in danger, but the communalists themselves constituted a great danger to the whole of the country. The President disallowed it as not being an amendment but an independent proposition.

## MR. PANDE'S AMENDMENT.

Mr. Chandra Datt Pande (U. P.) moved an amendment that the goal of Independence should be made the immediate goal.

He feared that there was likelihood of the present motion being interpreted to mean that independence was a distant goal.

Swami Kumaranand, opposing the resolution, believed that the boycott of the Simon Commission and the framing of a constitution like the Nehru Report were inconsistent. The Nehru Committee, he declared, had already co-operated with the Simon Commission. He pleaded for a revolutionary programme, and would spread it to the Indian States as well. The aim of the Congress should be to establish a parallel Government. It was not for an Indian Commonwealth, that the Kakori prisoners were hanged, the youths of Bengal interned, and political prisoners like himself were made to drink their own urine.

Mr. O. Kandaswami Chetti (Madras) vigorously defended that the goal should be emphasised as immediate Independence.

Pandit Jawaharlal NEHRU supporting the resolution of Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar, urged the movers of the amendments to withdraw them because the resolution had rightly made it clear that the only ideal India could have was that of the destruction of Imperialism, and because Independence signified an attack against Imperialism. He personally did not like the exact wording of the resolution, but on that score he would not complain, because it gave perfect liberty of action to Congressmen to preach socialism and independence. He believed in full-blooded socialism, but would not bring that before the Congress now, because very few understood it. A time however would come when the Congress, for the sake of its own existence, would adopt the socialist programme in full.

In the country, there were two sets of ideas :—one for Independence, the other for Dominion Status. He did not agree with those who thought that a large measure of freedom could be had by connection with Britain. But he was firmly of the view that unless the British connection was cut off root and branch, there was no chance for India to attain her freedom. It was a question of extreme resistance to what was called Imperialism. The leaders in the Congress did not know the implications of Imperialism. They would not study these things. They were concerned only with the attitude of the British parties.

Mrs. Besant had argued that India was unable to defend herself, and therefore she could not ask for Independence. India did not want any protection from Great Britain. If India could not defend herself from aggression on the Frontier and round the sea coast now, as alleged, how would she be able to defend herself by asking for Dominion Status? Who did not know of the Skeen Committee, which was rejected by the Government of India? India had an efficient army already and if there was no sufficiency of officers, then they could be had on payment, so that they might act according to the bidding of Free India in the same manner as France, Russia and other countries in the world did when they were faced with revolution. England's strength lay in her possession of India. India had no fear of aggression from Afghanistan, which in spite of her army was undeveloped and had petty resources.

Mr. SATYAMURTI supported the resolution moved by Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar, and said that it would be a thousand pities if, because of difference of opinion, the good work of the Nehru Committee should go to waste. The existence of the Congress demanded continuous loyalty to its resolutions by Congressmen. Unless there was a conflict of conscience, the duty of Congressmen who were members of the Nehru Committee was to reconcile their recommendations to the resolutions of the Congress. Fortunately, the All-Parties Conference had given liberty to Congressmen to work for Independence, and this he proposed to exercise now in favour of Independence. To say that a Congressman could be for Independence as a member of the Congress and for Dominion Status as a member of the All-Parties' Conference was a most untenable position to take up.

Mr. Satyamurti feared that if the All-Parties Conference continued to exist, the Congress itself would be given a secondary place. Congressmen gave up Indepen-

dence and agreed to Dominion Status for the sake of unity. Did the Liberals give any guarantee that they would not give up Dominion Status, or if it was not given, that they would not try for offices in the Viceroy's Executive Council? Why all this hunt after the maricha of unity with such people, thereby giving a wrong lead to the country? Dr. Besant had talked of England's protection of India. But go anywhere in the world, and there you would find England's name stinking in men's nostrils. England had no friends, but India had no enemies. With a resurgent China and Russia and with Afghanistan being democratised, India was capable of defending herself and need have no fear of Britain. He protested against the campaign of a section of Congressmen in Madras to malign those who worked for Independence; and he wanted the Congress Committee to see that the prestige of the Congress was not lowered. In demanding Complete Independence they were not fighting for paper resolutions, but for a change in the angle of vision, so that they could introduce the policy of Sinn Fein and establish freedom for India without looking for it elsewhere.

#### PANDIT MOTILAL EXPLAINS HIS POSITION.

Pandit Motilal NEHRU, at the outset, made a confession of faith. He yielded not even to Pandit Jawaharlal (Hear, hear) in the firm belief in complete Independence for India. He had always believed that there was no remedy for India's ills except complete Independence; but at the same time he had held that Dominion Status was not to be spurned away. (A voice: Will it be given?) "I see there is less distance between Dominion Status and Independence than there is between dependence and Independence. I know, Dominion Status will never be given to you, unless one of the parties is forced by circumstances. At any rate, it will not be willingly given; but the All-Parties' Committee has done unexpected good work in that it has secured unanimity of opinion on the question of Dominion Status. It has brought together various political organisations to agree to Dominion Status as the minimum demand and as the starting point for Congressmen to work with the other parties. It was very good showing the strength of feeling behind the Congress."

He (the speaker) was not in India when the Congress last year passed a resolution authorising the Working Committee to arrange for an All-Parties Conference. He himself felt pessimistic about its utility, but it having been launched upon, the conference was brought into existence and its committee framed a constitution. As the committee made it clear, the goal of the Congress was not in any way lowered. But it made the Congress know from the other parties that they were all for a form of Government which would in no case be lower than that which prevailed in the self-governing dominions. Not having been responsible for the Committee's creation he was in honour bound to support its decisions. But if his position was considered inconsistent with his membership of the executive of the Congress and with his being the President-elect of the Congress, then he would resign from that position. The full reason why he supported the resolution was that while it enabled the Independence-wallahs to pursue their own programme, it gave equal liberty to those who advocated Dominion Status to pursue theirs. At the same time he did not want any party to malign the other.

Proceeding, Pandit Matilal explained his own position. "Within a few weeks I shall be riding two horses, one, the All-Parties horse, the other the Congress horse. Unless I can keep both horses well in command, I won't try it. (Laughter.) My position is going to be that I advocate Dominion Status having been a signatory to the All-Parties Report, whether I believe in Dominion Status or not. But for the fact that this resolution states that the Nehru Committee Report is a great step towards political advance, you would never find me supporting this resolution wholeheartedly. Because it gives liberty of action to those who are for Dominion Status you must not run away with the idea that the Congress is for Independence. It may be that the majority in the next Congress is for Independence, but the minority has always the right to convince and convert the majority. There is really no half way house between complete Independence and complete dependence. Every day strengthens me in my conviction that the Government are not going to concede even Dominion Status."

"The way the Simon Commission is going about its work is sufficient proof. Pandit Jawaharlal has charged the leaders of the Congress with ignorance of the implications of Socialism. I plead guilty to it ; but I can claim that I can foresee more clearly than he can. You cannot prevent Congressmen from supporting the All-Parties decisions, although they may be far short of the Congress resolutions."

A voice : Is the All-Parties Conference co-existent with the Congress ?

Pandit Motilal (warming up) declared ; I say, the All-Parties Conference is greater than even the Congress. The Congress cannot be bigger than what it is. The All-Parties Conference was brought about by the Congress, which is a party to it. We must stand by its decisions.

#### AMENDMENTS WITHDRAWN.

After Pandit Motilal Nehru had spoken, the President Dr. Ansari announced the withdrawal of all amendments to the main resolution by Dr. Annie Besant. Mr. Abdul Hameed Khan, Lala Dunichand and Mr. C. D. Pande.

Lala Lajpat RAI said that he agreed with most of what Pandit Motilal had said. His wish however was to turn out the British from India even by force. They had to gain freedom by any means which was practicable and available. He declared that the British did not occupy their present position by peaceful and legitimate means. Non-violence, as a policy, was all right ; but it should not be accepted as a creed. Proceeding, Lala Lajpat Rai said that he would not oppose the resolution but would neither support it. The oath of allegiance and the independence ideal were two inconsistent things and as long as he retained his seat in the Assembly, he could not declare complete independence. He however did not oppose independence. He was with the motion mentally. (Laughter). What was required to-day was incessant propaganda among the masses with a view to prepare them for a revolution. He deplored that they had not yet devised any means, and the only business they had so far indulged in, was talking mere words. Anybody who talked of independence must give up the vestige of communal representation. They should not think of making the cause of independence a political loot.

Alluding to the Nehru Report, the speaker warned his countrymen that if they threw away the present atmosphere, they would be doing great disservice to the country. He begged of the people not to make the position of Pandit Motilal Nehru a difficult one.

Replying to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Lala Lajpat Rai said that there was no nation in the world which was not desirous of dominating India. He had seen more of Socialism than what Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had ever heard of. Whenever any Asiatic question cropped up, all European powers combined together to put down Asia.

Mr. C. S. Ranga Aiyar suggested that voting should be postponed till the next day as Lala Lajpat Rai's speech called for a discussion.

Replying to the debate, Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar stated that he wanted to forget the past, and make a clean slate for the future. He did not subscribe to the view that the Independence resolution was a paper resolution. He would stand for complete independence and not Dominion Status.

Replying to Lala Lajpat Rai Mr. Iyengar said it was not inconsistent to take the oath of allegiance to the Crown in the legislature and to declare and work for Independence. Even if it was not so he would prefer to err in the company of Keir Hardy, De Valera and Hertzog. His notions of honour were fundamentally different from those of Lala Lajpat Rai. Then again the oath of allegiance was confined to business in the Councils only. He asked the members not to attach any importance to Lala Lajpat Rai's opinion on this subject.

#### ORIGINAL RESOLUTION CARRIED

The resolution on being put to vote, was declared carried 'nem con', only Lala Lajpat Rai and Dr. Besant not participating in the voting. The committee dispersed at 8 p.m. and adjourned till next day.

#### MOTION FOR RECONSIDERATION DISALLOWED

When the All-India Congress Committee reassembled on the 4th NOVEMBER Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya (who arrived in the morning) moved reconsideration of

the resolution of the Working Committee passed yesterday by the All-India Congress Committee, and sought to delete the words "that there can be no true freedom till the British connection is severed."

Pandit Malaviya contended that the Congress Committee was not justified in going beyond the Madras Congress resolution on independence. That decision left open the question of India being within or outside the British Empire. He emphasised that under self-government new autonomous communities would be equal in status and in no way subordinate to one another either in domestic or external matters, though united by common allegiance.

Dr. M. A. Ansari ruled out the motion as having been decided after full discussion.

### 5. Sympathy with the Working Class.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru then moved a resolution expressing sympathy with those workers who had been on strike in the various parts of the country and admiration for the determined struggle which they had waged against hunger and the forces of the employing classes and the Government.

Swami Kumaranand and Mr. Subash Chandra Bose supported the motion. The latter denied the charge that Congressmen had not been taking interest in Labour struggle. In his own province, they had identified themselves with the sorrows and troubles of Labour; but he admitted that, generally speaking, the charges were justified. Mr. Subash Chandra Bose declared that he stood for a "rapprochement" between Congress and Labour.

### AN AMENDMENT REJECTED

Mr. Muttra Prasad moved an amendment to the effect, that the Congress Committee expressed sympathy with only those who went on strike justifiably. He maintained that the executive of the Congress should be an Arbitration Board between Labour and Capital. The resolution suggested that capitalists were always wrong, and the strikers right.

Pandit Malaviya supported the amendment. He said that sufficient care had not been taken in the past while calling strikes.

Mr. Bose : Give us an instance when sufficient care was not taken.

Pandit Malaviya : I think the Bombay strike was started without sufficient care of consequences.

Mr. Muttra Prasad's amendment on being put to the vote was rejected by 24 votes against 18 and the original resolution was passed unanimously.

### 6. Simon Boycott.

Mr. S. Satyamurti then moved the following resolution :—

"The All-India Congress Committee has noted with satisfaction that, notwithstanding all official efforts to the contrary, the boycott of the Simon Commission has been carried out with success, and all representative organisations and representative men have kept aloof from the Commission. The Committee trusts the boycott will be maintained to the end."

Mr. Satyamurti regretted that Sir John Simon who was acclaimed as a very able and intelligent person should consciously play the leading part in the farce that was being enacted. If Sir John was able he ought to have seen that the miscellaneous group of witnesses who came before the Commission were by no means either representative or even intelligent or knew what they wanted. Yet Sir John Simon was going about trumpeting that valuable evidence was being collected. The Government of India and the Provincial Governments re-echoed the pompous announcement of the Commission that they had nothing to do with each other, and that the Commission would hear evidence impartially. But to-day, the Commission stalked through the land as the handmaid of the bureaucracy, chaperoned by the police and housed at Government Houses. In Madras, for instance, the provisions of the Criminal Procedure and Indian Penal Codes were invoked to break the boycott movement. Indeed, the Commission's mind had been made up. Did not Lord Burnham, when a witness pleaded for the separation of judicial from executive functions, asked him to give reasons beyond what were advanced by the Congressmen? Again,

at Lahore did not the members of the Commission suggest in regard to communal representation, that minorities could only be given protection by official nomination of so called representatives or by perpetuation of separate electorates? In effect the trend of the evidence of the unofficial witnesses was : "We do not know what we want or what the country wants ; but if you are going to give any reforms or privileges, then let us have a share much beyond what we are entitled to, either by population or wealth or intelligence."

It was a truthful claim to say that the Commission had been successfully boycotted. The Nehru Committee Report was a valuable contribution to the framing of a constitution on a democratic basis with full guarantee for minorities. When the leading men in the country produced such a constitution, Sir John Simon patronisingly called it as the product of a group of politicians. That was insulting to the dignity and self-respect of the Congress and the country. He declared that the Nehru Report was not intended by its authors or by the All-India Congress Committee for Sir John Simon and his Commission, but was produced in the exercise of the principle of self-determination. The unity which was going to impress Sir John Simon and England and which would get anything to India, would be the unity of maintaining the boycott unimpaired.

Dr. Satyapal (Lahore) referred to the huge demonstration and procession against the Commission on the day of its arrival in Lahore. The attack on Lala Lajpat Rai was wanton, brutal and uncalled for. The purpose behind it was to incite the people to violence. There was no representative body which had co-operated with the Commission in the Punjab. The effectiveness of the boycott was so severe that the Commission office looked like an armed camp and the C. I. D. Inspectors were acting as chaprasses and bearers.

Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar supporting the motion felt satisfied that the Congress Working Committee's boycott decision had proved correct, but the success was due to the exertions of both Congressmen and non-Congressmen throughout the country. Indeed, the boycott movement was the second great movement after the Non-co-operation Movement. When Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya told him that morning that the cry of "Simon, Go Back" was music in the Punjab, he felt that the illness he had for the last six weeks had disappeared. The boycott mentality was sure to be productive of constructive results.

#### AMENDMENT FOR HOLDING HARTALS ACCEPTED

Lala Shankar Lal, Secretary of the Delhi Congress Committee moved an amendment for holding hartals in all places to be visited by the Simon Commission.

He detailed at length the tactics played by the Bureaucracy in giving out wrong timings of the arrival and departure of the Simon Commission. He pointed out a C. I. D. informer in the visitors' gallery who, he said, had come to the committee by purchasing a visitor's ticket and continued to take notes in spite of permission not having been given to him. (Shame, Shame).

Lala Shankar Lal's amendment was carried by a majority and the amended resolution was passed.

#### 9. Other Resolutions.

The Working Secretary then placed the following resolution of the Working Committee before the A. I. C. C. for the information of the house :—

"The Working Committee resolves that a Congress Research Section be organised and that, to begin with, two scholars be appointed, and that Rs. 6,000 be set apart for the present for this purpose. The Committee resolves further that the Working Secretary should take the necessary steps in this behalf.

The following resolution passed by the Working Committee for adoption by the A. I. C. C. was moved by the Working Secretary :—

"The A. I. C. C. recommends to affiliate the London Branch of the Indian National Congress."

The resolution was carried.

The following resolution of the Working Committee was placed before the A. I. C. C. by the Secretary for the information of the house :—



Read letter from the League against Imperialism re. Next World Congress of the League.

"Resolved that the Working Secretary be authorised to act on behalf of the Congress."

The Secretary then moved the following resolution on behalf of the Working Committee :—

"That the report submitted by the Committee appointed to revise the Congress constitution be considered by the Subjects Committee of the ensuing Congress at Calcutta."

The resolution was put to the vote and carried.

The Secretary then read out the following resolution passed by the Working Committee on the 1st September, 1928 at Lucknow :—

"This Committee has noted with regret that various Congress Council Parties have not been following the instructions contained in the Madras Congress resolution on Council work. The Committee, however, recognises that these Parties had to face difficult situations and it was not often easy to follow the Congress instructions. In view of all the circumstances the Committee is of opinion that Council Parties should be allowed greater latitude in regard to Council work. The Committee, however, hopes that the spirit of the Congress resolution will be adhered to. The Committee recommends accordingly to the A. I. C. C."

Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar moved that the resolution be formally adopted by the Committee. Mr. Abdul Hamid Khan seconded. Mr. M. S. Aney (Berar) spoke in support of the Working Committee's resolution. Mr. B. G. Horniman (Karnatak) opposed the motion of Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar and wished to refer the resolution to the Subjects Committee of the next Congress for consideration. Mr. T. Viswanatham (Andhra) seconded Mr. Horniman. Mr. Abdul Hamid Khan opposed Mr. Horniman's suggestion to postpone consideration. Mr. Horniman's motion for postponement was put to the vote and lost. Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar's motion to adopt the Working Committee's resolution was then put and declared carried.

*The Committee then adjourned.*

## The Proceedings of the Calcutta meeting.

In an atmosphere of subdued excitement the next and last meeting of the A. I. C. C. for the year was held in Deshbandhunagar, Calcutta on Wednesday the 26th DECEMBER 1928 on the eve of the Congress under the presidency of Dr. Ansari. There was a large gathering. Among those present were Mahatma Gandhi, Pts. Motilal, Malaviya, Messrs. J. M. Sen Gupta, Srinivasa Iyengar, Sardar Mangal Singh, Subhas Chandra Bose, Dr. Kitchlew, Mrs. Besant, Smta. Basanti Devi and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. Among the visitors were Mr. Ryan of pan-Pacific Labour Secretariat and Mr. Bradely of Labour Research Bureau, London.

### ATTACK ON BENGAL CONGRESS M. L. C.'S

At the outset Dr. Ansari regretted postponement of the meeting fixed for Tuesday adding that they were not sitting idle but were trying to come to an agreement between the two wings of the Congress. This over the proceedings of the Working Committee and the General Secretaries' annual report were adopted.

Sj. BISWANATH moved the resolution that the A. I. C. C. disapproved the conduct of the Congress Party in the Bengal Council during the last tenancy legislation. He charged the Swarajists with sins of omission and commission in as much as they had voted with the Government in a measure which further strengthened the hands of Zemindars. Mr. Pattavi Sitarammya raised a point of order to the effect that Sj. Biswanath had no locus standi as the Bengal Congress Party did not act in violation of the Madras resolution. The President replied that there was nothing in the Congress resolution to prevent a member to bring in such resolution. Mr. Nimbskar seconded. Mr. Sen Gupta replying said that they had no alternative but to act in the way they did with the special permission of the Working Committee. He pointed out that they had no initiative in the matter and when the bill was introduced they could not allow the third party

to play the one party against another. What they did was to follow Deshbandhu's principle laying down that until freedom was attained they must so adjust relations between tenants and zemindars as to avoid civil war. The bill was a comprehensive measure and what they had done for the ryot was that for the first time they had given the tenants rights of occupancy in land and to dig wells and right to sell and these could only be done because the Congress members were there. Let the Congress give definite lead and he would act accordingly. Mr. Aney supported Mr. Sen-Gupta. At this stage Mahatma Gandhi with Pt. Motilal arrived and were received with shouts of "Bandemataram." Mr. Ramdas Pantalu expressed disappointment at Mr. Sen-Gupta's Speech as either in spirit or in letter the Bengal Congress party had not followed the Gauhati resolution urging the Congress to work for the betterment of the condition of tenants and ryots.

Mr. Harisarvotham Rao of Madras requested the mover to withdraw the resolution after Mr. Akhil Ch. Dutt had explained the circumstances under which Congress Party took part in the discussion. The motion for closure was put at this stage. On an assurance from Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose that they acted in the interest of tenants, the mover begged leave of the House to withdraw his motion. The motion was then withdrawn.

Dr. ANSARI, the retiring President of the National Congress, then in his farewell speech said :—"I wish to say a few words on this occasion. My predecessor Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar when he handed over the charge had done a great deal of work to the country to bring the two communities together (hear, hear) ; in fact it was his pioneer work which was of considerable help during my tenure of office. According to the representation of the Congress, we called the All-Parties Conference and the Nehru Report which has been a landmark and real advance of the country, has been before the country and before you. We have done a great deal of work since the Nehru Report was placed before you. I may tell you that the situation in the country, whether it is as regards Hindu Moslem question or whether unity of various political schools of thought, is quite different from what it had been in years past. I may tell you gentlemen, that this Convention which you have called and which has done so much work, I am very sorry to say, is at present facing crisis. It depends entirely on you, on your statesmanship and farsightedness whether you want to achieve and reap the work of the Nehru Report. I beg of you to think wisely before you decide one way or the other. I have been striving hard to bring unity not only between Hindus and Moslems and although I am myself the President of the Congress, I believe in the goal of independence. I have been bringing into the sections together. To-day you have to face that question in the very beginning and I say that that is the heart of the whole constitution. If you stab the heart, if you allow the heart to be stopped, the whole organism will be dead and you will not be able to revive it. Think very carefully before you decide to act one way or the other."

Then Dr. Ansari welcomed the new President Pandit Motilal Nehru and requested him to occupy the chair.

At this stage the All-India Congress Committee converted itself into the Subjects Committee.

### Proceedings of the Subjects Committee.

As Pandit MOTILAL took the chair he said : "All I can say before I take my seat as the President-elect is that a heavy responsibility has been handed to me by your retiring president. It is not usual, I suppose, for the President-elect as it is usual for the Viceroys who come to this country to announce what policies they will pursue. As Dr. Ansari has just pointed out to you at the very commencement of the proceeding that you will have to face a question of the most vital importance to the whole country. My services to you will depend on how you tackle the question. I have to give as much assistance as I possibly can in working the resolution which will soon be placed before you. All that I can say is that it will depend upon your work and the line you choose to adopt whether I shall be useful at all or not, and if so to what extent. I am not, therefore, able to say more at present but I hope you will

make it possible if not easy for me to bear the burden which is being handed to me by the retiring President."

### 1. Condolence Resolutions.

Pandit Motilal then placed from the chair two condolence resolutions relating to the death of Hakim Ajmal Khan, Lord Sinha and Lala Lajpat Rai, three ex-Presidents of the Congress and Messrs. Maganlal Gandhi, Gopabandhu Das and Gopal Krishna Iyer which were adopted all standing. The Pandit further moved from the chair: "That this Congress condemns the attack by the Lahore police on Lala Lajpat Rai and other leaders near the railway station while leading the boycott procession on the arrival of the Simon Commission as deliberate and unprovoked and believes that the death of Lalaji was accelerated by the injuries he received at the hands of the police." This resolution was also carried.

The Pandit then said that one member had sent in notice of a condolence resolution regarding the death of the Rajah of Panagal. He pointed out that it was not their custom to adopt such resolutions; their custom being to confine resolutions to deaths of persons connected with the Congress. By this they did not mean disrespect to others. They might as well like to pass resolutions about Mr. S. R. Das.

### 2. Dominion Status.

This over, Mahatma Gandhi, amidst applause, moved the Working Committee's resolution on Dominion Status. This resolution was arrived at in the Working Committee by a majority of six to five votes. The following is the full text of the resolution:—

"This Congress having considered the constitution recommended by the All-Parties Committee report welcomes it as a great contribution towards the solution of India's political and communal problems and congratulates the Committee on the virtual unanimity of its recommendations and whilst adhering to the resolution relating to complete independence passed at the Madras Congress adopts the constitution drawn up by the Committee as a great step in political advance specially as it represents the largest measure of agreement attained among the important parties in the country.

"Provided however that the Congress shall not be bound by the constitution if it is not accepted on or before the 31st December 1930 and provided further that in the event of non-acceptance by the British Parliament of the constitution by that date the Congress will revive non-violent non-co-operation by advising the country to refuse taxation and every other aid to Government.

"The President is hereby authorised to send the text of this resolution together with the copy of the said report to His Excellency the Viceroy for such action as he may be pleased to take.

"Nothing in the resolution shall interfere with the propaganda for familiarising the people with the goal of independence in so far as it does not conflict with the prosecution of the campaign for the adoption of the said report.

"Meanwhile the Congress shall engage in the following activities:—

(1) In the legislatures and outside every attempt will be made to bring about total prohibition of intoxicating drugs and drinks; picketting of liquor and drug shops shall be organised wherever desirable and possible.

(2) Inside and outside the legislatures methods suited to respective environments shall be immediately adopted to bring about boycott of foreign cloth by advocating and stimulating production and adoption of handspun and handwoven khaddar.

(3) Specific grievances wherever discovered and where people are ready shall be sought to be redressed by non-violent action as was done recently at Bardoli.

(4) Members of legislatures returned on the Congress ticket shall devote the bulk of their time to the constructive work settled from time to time by the Congress-Committee.

(5) The Congress organisation shall be perfected by enlisting members and enforcing stricter discipline.

(6) Measures shall be taken to rid the country of social abuses.

(7) Measures shall be taken to remove the disabilities of women and they will be invited and encouraged to take their due share in national up-building.

(8) It will be the duty of all Congress-men, being Hindus, to do all they can to

remove untouchability and help the so-called untouchables in every possible way in their attempt to remove their disabilities and better their condition.

(9) Volunteers shall be enlisted to take up village reconstruction in addition to what is being done through the spinning wheel and Khaddar.

(10) Such other work as may be deemed advisable in order to advance nation-building in all its departments and in order to enable the Congress to secure the co-operation in the national effort of the people engaged in different pursuits.

"In order to finance the activities mentioned in the foregoing programme, every Congressman with a monthly income of Rs. 100 and over shall contribute five per cent. of his monthly income provided that in special cases exemption may be granted at the discretion of the Working Committee.

Mahatma Gandhi before moving the above resolution in an introductory speech delivered in Hindusthani, said that he was not well disposed to speak on the motion but the gravity of the situation demanded that he should also put his views before the country. Although he liked to speak in Hindusthani, the national language of the country, the circumstances demanded that he should move his resolution in English. Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru then read out the resolution.

Continuing Mahatmaji said : "Friends, I hope I shall not detain you for many minutes in my introductory remarks. It is an open secret that we have in our camp sharp differences of opinion as to the lead the Congressmen should receive in connection with the epoch-making report—I call it an epoch-making report—of the All-Parties Committee. We have the Delhi resolution and the first thing that strikes anybody would be why not affirm or reaffirm the Delhi resolution dealing with this question if it could have been done consistently with national interest. There could have been an end to all new resolutions and certainly I would not have troubled you. I must take you in confidence and tell you that the President himself felt that the Delhi resolution required re-thinking and revision. Some of us putting our heads together came to the conclusion that the Delhi resolution was a self-contradictory resolution. So we cast about to find a middle path so that consistently with honesty and with the desire to accept the Nehru Report we should frame another resolution. And this resolution is the result. Even as it is this resolution is an attempt to satisfy and if not to satisfy at least to conciliate both these schools of thought that are prevailing in the Congress with regard to the report. That we have two schools of thought is no matter of misfortune or grief.

It would be grievous if in trying to satisfy or conciliate both the parties, we adopt a resolution which will fail in its intended purpose. I suggest to you that the purpose of every Congressman should be to adopt the Nehru Report in the same spirit in which it was received by the whole of India at the time it was published. Let me recall to you the fact that at the time of its publication it was not only enthusiastically received by the whole nation but it commanded, it extorted unsimulated admiration of our critics, of our opponents and of out-siders who were disinterested. It is open to you, if you choose so, to say that we shall not accept the Report but I say it would be bad if we came to such a conclusion hastily. But if after the first flush of enthusiasm had died out and after a careful study of the report you came to the conclusion that the best interests of the nation will not be served by accepting the report it would be your bounden duty, even though painful, to reject it. I suggest to you that either we should give our whole-hearted support or we should not support it at all. It is a document which is not an end in itself but the beginning of the end. It is a document which is designed to bring as many important parties as it is possible to bring together with a view to concentrate their attention and efforts upon some common purpose in connection with our political advances.

When the Committee approached its labours you must know that the horizon was perfectly dark. I know myself that there were tremendous difficulties and there was a time when there was nothing but despair staring the members in the face but Dr. Ansari and your President were not men who would give easily to despair. They fought the despair and how successfully you know and the world knows.

Proceeding Gandhiji reminded the house that the All-Parties Conference was

brought into being at the instance of the Working Committee of the Congress and that being so he suggested that unless there were overwhelming reasons why they should not accept the Report, it must be accepted by them.

"I wish to make another suggestion that you cannot take this Report piecemeal. It is an organic whole. Just as you cannot chop a boat and say I will have so much of the body and will not have the other half, so you cannot chop this report and say you will accept this part and not the other one. As Dr. Ansari has pointed out if you attack the central theme of the report you stab the heart itself and the central theme is what is known as Dominion Status. I suggest to you that it will be a grievous blunder to pit Independence against Dominion Status and compare the two and suggest that Dominion Status carries humiliation with it and that Independence is something that is triumphant. I do not want to go into the controversy just now. I simply say to you as a man, as a business man wanting to serve the nation, wanting to educate the masses, to influence the masses and desiring to enlist the active co-operation of the masses in order to vindicate the honour of the nation. I suggest if you seek to do all these things you will think fifty times before you will go to the masses and compare these two things. Don't run to the hasty conclusion that the distinguished authors of the report had the interest of the country less at heart than many of you or it may be most of you. Do not run away with the hasty conclusion that they want any thing less than Complete Independence for the country. The word "Independence" is much abused and is equally a misunderstood word. The contents of that word would vary with the strengths that the nation can call to its aid from time to time (hear, hear). The independence of Nepal is not the same as the independence of America. The independence of the feudatory states—they flattered themselves with the belief that they are independent, they are sometimes called semi-independent states and they adopt the roll of independence in their people. Let us not, therefore, make too much of one word and belittle the other one. I as a tried worker and as one who knows something of the masses desire to warn you against confusing the minds of the nation, the minds of the masses. By taking those two words before the nation you will simply entrap them and lead them into a trap. I suggest that the man who desires independence has been given it to him by this resolution and I want to leave one thought with you.

"The Madras resolution gives you the goal of the Congress. It tells you that this shall be the goal but it is not a declaration of independence. You are not now working for independence of the type that the authors of that resolution had in their minds. The Congress creed is a creed for Independence and I challenge anybody to deny that ; but that is one thing,—that is a process of evolution. But some of us consider that we should have the word independence incorporated in the same resolution of the Congress so that we can put it before the nation. By all means have it, keep that word. But, in considering this resolution, I desire to tell you that the process of arriving at that species of independence is accelerated by it. It is not retarded. You might easily have slept over the goal you have set before yourselves in Madras but here you dare not sleep over it. At the end of two years you have got practically to work out your independence, almost I might say practically to declare independence and some of you, some of us, including myself if I live at the end of two years, have to die in the attempt to give a good account of what we are trying to do and to tell the nation that independence is in sight and if it is not in sight to tell them that they will see it over our carcases in winning it.

"I yield to none in my desire to attain complete independence. So long as there is one man who can interfere with my freedom and with the nation's freedom it is intolerable and I consider that I live in vain. The fire of independence is burning just as bright in my breast as in the most fiery breast in this country ; but ways and methods differ and it may be when I am nearing my destiny on this earth I may feel weakened. Oh ! for independence we might wait for fifty years. If that is so you may tell me and you may point out where I have weakened. You will not then listen to me, then hiss me out of the platform. I will consider myself unworthy to serve the nation out of weakness. I want to dedicate what little strength I have to the nation and not my weakness. Therefore, do not run away with the idea for one single moment that I want to suggest anything else than what the nation should have to-day, what the nation should have to-morrow and I suggest that if you really

want to work out the resolution of Madras you have got the amplest possible scope here on the supreme condition that having called the Convention into being I want to be faithful, as faithful to that report as you will be faithful to your own goal and I will ask you to interpret that report in terms of that goal and feel that the authors of the report had also the goal of independence in their view.

"I do not propose just now to discuss the resolution, I will do so after amendments have come before you. I want you to dismiss all personal considerations. What shall we do with a old man? After all he has served the nation well and let us therefore fling "yea, yea" in his face. I do not want you to become my patrons. I want you to treat me as a comrade marching side by side with you and I want you also to outbeat me in the race, in the march towards the goal. Therefore, you will say; "Doctors have prescribed rest for you and you will have your well-deserved rest." We are going to run and if you march side by side with us we shall have to crawl—crawling we have buried in that wretched lane at Amritsar." If so I will say: "Go on." I do not want you to consider this resolution in any patronising spirit, nor does your President-elect stand in need of your patronage. He will perhaps feel more offended, far more deeply cut, if he felt that anybody was patronising him. Therefore, eliminate all personal considerations and make your own choice. As I told you this report is only the commencement. There is lot of work before us if you are going to achieve the purpose. We have to do much spade work even in this Congress. The Moslem League, the Hindu Mahasabha and every other organisation has got to do its duty before we can launch out that report upon the wide ocean. It is necessary for you to chalk out a resolution which will satisfy all the needs of that report and not merely say, "all right we accept the report", lest anybody might be offended or in order that diplomats may go on with diplomacy and steal something for us. It will not come by stealing. Freedom has never come by stealing, it has come by bleeding and you will have to bleed even for getting what is attempted in that report.

"I, therefore, want you either to accept that report whole-heartedly with fixed determination to work. For that work I do not want you to water down your goal. I want you to sustain your goal. You can, if you wish you may, misinterpret it or interpret it in any other way. I hope you will approach the consideration of this resolution in a national spirit and if I may also say, in a prayerful spirit."

#### AMENDMENTS

After the motion had been seconded by Mr. Hari Sarvottam Rao, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Sjt. Kiran Sankar Ray handed in amendments indicating their attitude of opposition to Mahatmaji's resolution. Both the amendments proposed are practically reiteration of the Delhi resolution with a few verbal alterations. Instead of affirming that there can be no true freedom till all connexion with the British is severed, Pandit Jawaharlal's amendment stated that there can be no true freedom till all connexion with British Imperialism is severed while Sjt. Kiran Shankar Ray's amendment categorically stated that British connexion should be severed. Then again Pandit Jawaharlal accepted the Nehru Report without prejudice to the Madras Congress resolution relating to complete independence but Sjt. Kiran Sankar did not accept Dominion Status as the basis of India's constitution. Dr. Besant put in an amendment for deletion of words referring to complete independence in the resolution and of certain other words. More amendments were forthcoming when the committee adjourned.

#### SECOND DAY—27TH DECEMBER 1928.

The Subjects Committee met on on this day at about 9 a. m. Pandit Nehru who on arrival was greeted with cheers regretted delay in the commencement of the proceedings and said that delay was due to weighty reasons. He then asked Pandit Jawaharlal to move his amendment.

#### PT. JAWAHARLAL'S AMENDMENT

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru moved the following amendment to Mahatmaji's resolution :—(1) This Congress adheres to the decision of the Madras Congress declaring

complete independence to be the goal of Indian people and is of opinion that there can be no true freedom till British connection is severed.

(ii). The Congress accepts the recommendation of the Nehru Committee as agreed to by the Lucknow All-Parties Conference for the settlement of communal differences.

(iii) The Congress cordially congratulates the Nehru Committee for their labours, patriotism and foresightedness and without prejudice to the resolution of the Congress relating to complete independence, is of opinion that the recommendations of the Nehru Committee are a great step towards political advance and without committing itself to every detail, generally approves of them.

(b) With a view to devise sanctions to enforce the nation's will and with a view to organise the people for resistance to foreign domination, this Congress is of opinion that the country should be prepared for civil disobedience and nonpayment of taxes and authorises the A. I. C. C. to take all necessary steps in this behalf. The A. I. C. C. may fix the date and place when and where such nonpayment may begin or convene special session of the Congress for the purpose.

"Specific grievances wherever discovered and where the people are ready shall be sought to be redressed by direct nonviolent action as was done recently in Bardoli.

"Every effort shall be made to bring about the boycott of foreign cloth, encouragement of production and use of hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar and boycott of British goods.

"Peasantry and workers should be organised on the basis of an economic programme which is to be drafted by the A. I. C. C.

"Measures shall be taken to rid the country of untouchability and to bring about total prohibition of intoxicating drugs and drinks.

"National Volunteer corps in the country should be strengthened and consolidated.

"In order to finance the activities mentioned above, every Congressman with the minimum monthly income of Rs. 100 and over shall contribute a percentage of his income which is to be fixed by the A. I. C. C.

"The A. I. C. C. is authorised to add to the programme as and when occasion arises."

Moving the resolution, Pandit Jawaharlal said :—"It is unbecoming for the Secretary of the Working Committee to challenge a resolution recommended by the Working Committee and certainly it might be considered presumptuous on my part to get up and challenge the resolution moved by Mahatmaji. Notwithstanding, I have felt it incumbent to do so because of the very teaching I have learnt at his feet, because of the lesson he taught me when I had the high privilege to serve under his banner. At the conclusion of his address, he advised us not to vote for the resolution because of the personality involved."

Proceeding, the Pandit pointed out that his resolution was identical with that moved and passed at Delhi and although for himself, he would have liked to keep the word "British imperialism," he had agreed to delete that with a view to make it identical with the Delhi resolution. It might be further said that the Delhi resolution was self-contradictory and perhaps there was not so much of mental honesty as there should be about the resolution in this house. He thought that the charge was partly justified as all compromise resolutions were like that. They could get rid of that by taking a definite line with the resolution of others but their political life being what it was, they had very often to term down their demands and pass resolutions which some of them might not like in their entirety as they wanted certain unanimity of opinion to prevail. "You know very well that the Delhi resolution represented compromise so far as some of us are concerned ; giving up many things that we do not like to give up, but we felt it was not right for us to force the issue and have our viewpoints completely adopted by the Congress and thereby assume aggressive and bring about either split or a great deal of friction between ourselves. It is because that some of us earnestly desired that we should not take up any such position ; that we

should take up very minimum. It is from that viewpoint that this resolution was put forward and passed with practical unanimity, only one or two persons voting against it. It seems to be a very unfortunate commentary on the evolution of our public life for the last three months that a resolution passed at Delhi with unanimity should come in the shape of an amendment—an amendment which is not accepted by the mover, not accepted by the Working Committee which recommended the resolution to the Delhi A. I. C. C.

"I come before you with this resolution not because it is perfectly self-consistent but because it does offer fair and just basis for compromise between the two rival schools of thought who represent entirely two different mentality. I can assure the house that nothing shall be done on our part which will hinder our working together. We are prepared to give up much, we are prepared to subordinate our ideas to such extent but there are one or two things on which we find it impossible to give up, whatever consequence might follow. I have understood that in the programme of the nation as to what is to be done and what is not to be done, there would be compromise and we have to fit ourselves in with the other people's reasoning and desire, but I have not heard of compromise about the ideals of giving up an ideal to suit others' fancy. I do submit, whether it be for two years or one year or for a day, that giving up of ideal is a serious thing which represents that you are pulling down your flag, and that very serious thing you are welcome to do if you want it. But you must realise fully the international consequences. It must also be realised that if you are prepared to pull down the flag of independence, then do so by all means. But then you must give us the liberty to hold on to that flag, even though we may be in a minority. This was a vital issue and we feel with regard to it that there can be no compromise. It is a matter with us of the deepest conviction, it is a matter with us of what we think is the honour of the country and I submit that it should be a matter with this house and the Congress of the most vital consequence involving the honour of the country."

Proceeding, he criticised the argument which said that they could not accept the report of the Nehru Committee in part. He submitted that it was not a wholly correct statement to make because as far as the action was concerned, they were prepared as they had done in the past to co-operate in a large measure in giving publicity to the recommendations of the Nehru Report and he claimed that they had put no impediment in that way; on the contrary they had helped.

"But it is one thing to help it and another thing to give up what we cherish most. Without precipitating friction, we must remember that the issues will arise, as it arose in Ireland, whether you should accept Dominion Status or not. What had other countries done?"

"I am not aware of any such country which under similar circumstances had adopted deliberately and consciously the dominion ideal of government. I do not see why we should say that we want Dominion Status of government—mind you, it is not offered to us, there is no mention of this on the other side in their acts and deeds. You can see the insult offered to you when the Commission goes about your country adding insult to injuries. Do you think it is the right Swaraj to lower down the flag and to go on talking of Dominion Status?"

"Personally, I think from whatever point of view you look at it, either from the standpoint of national honour or from the point of view of expediency, if you accept Dominion Status, it would be an extremely wrong and foolish act. You know the incidents that have happened in the country. You know the death of Lala Lajpat Rai, you know what has happened at Lahore, Lucknow and you know what insulting threat the Viceroy has issued. After that, are you going to say you have not changed your opinion, whatever the Viceroy and the like may say? If there was ever any necessity for not pulling down the flag, it should not be drawn down at the present moment when threats are in the air (applause). After what has happened, what was happening, I think it would be a fatal error if you break the spirit of national resistance, if you tear down the flag of independence. After all, it is the programme of action that matters. Words do not carry us very far but certain idiology makes a great deal of difference.

"I submit to you honestly that if I have energy to serve the country, that energy



oozes out of me at the very thought of Dominion Status. I cannot go about spending my energy and strength for the Dominion Status (hear, hear). I do submit to you, there are many like me in this country who feel like that. You will find in all India groups of organisations that spring up full of energy and militant spirit and they promise to attain early freedom in India. Question is:—Are you going to help the development of this revolutionary spirit in this country or are you going to damp it and kill it in trying to bring about a compromise? Certainly it damps my spirit, if you talk of Dominion Status and I can only judge others by my standard.

“The real thing in this world is that it is not so much a question of struggle between India and England. Real conflict is between the two sets of the ideal and the question is, which set of ideal are you going to keep before the country? This is the conflict between imperialism and all that are not imperialism, and if you look at it from that point of view, you cannot for one moment think of the Dominion Status, so long as Great Britain has empire around her. That is the question before you. Just consider what you mean. By accepting Dominion Status, you show to the world that you are prepared to accept the psychology of imperialism and this is a very dangerous thing. For, then you talk in the terms of the British Empire as it is. For, you do not talk about in the terms of the British Commonwealth, which is likely to be later, say after two or three years. Do you expect the British Empire to suddenly become devoid of imperialism? I say, that is not going to happen. By accepting Dominion Status, you say that you are prepared to help their psychology of imperialism.

“Remember what effect it will have on the other empire. The world is divided to-day between the imperialistic and non-imperialistic groups. People do not understand the subtle line of logic about which we have heard so much, telling us that Dominion Status is really independence. People only want to say, which group you belong to, whether you belong to the imperialistic group or to the large number of exploited and suffering nation. To-day, you have received messages of sympathy from Java, Sumatra and other down-trodden countries, wishing you success because they feel that you are one of them and because they feel that by declaring for independence, you have joined with their struggle against imperialism all over the world. If you lower down the flag of independence and talk of Dominion Status, immediately you go back mentally at any rate to the fold of that very imperialism and you give up the cause of the suffering nations who look forward to you for success in their movement, not because that you are going to Java to help them, but because it is well-known in the world history for the last hundred years that the greatest obstacle to freedom is the British Empire and British possession of India. That is the fact which has governed the world history for a century and that is the fact which everybody realises to-day.

“Therefore to the extent you get rid of this imperialism, to that extent you help these down-trodden countries and if to gain some internal freedom, you adopt the psychology of imperialism and of the dominion status, you may gain little certainly but you leave the links with those people who are looking to you and are prepared to join with you in their struggle.

“I, therefore, submit to this house, that prepared as this house should be to any compromise on any lines, it should not be prepared to give up this definite and clear idea of independence for any length of time,” (applause).

#### OTHER AMENDMENTS.

Pandit MOTILAL then said that he would give 20 minutes to the mover of the main amendments and 10 minutes to the seconders and 5 minutes to the supporters. He wanted to have discretion in the matter of allowing time to the speakers on the general discussion.

Mr. Kiran Sankar Ray then withdraw his amendment, as it was similar to that of Pt. Jawaharlal.

Mr. NIMBKAR then moved an amendment, which runs thus :

“This Congress having considered the constitution recommended by the All-Parties Committee Report is of opinion that it is totally unsatisfactory and unacceptable for the following principal reasons :—

"(1) that it allows the bourgeoisie to compromise with British imperialism by establishing a so-called Dominion Status which involves the safeguard of vested interests, landowning, feudal and capitalist, and sacrifice of the interest of the masses.

"(2) that by recognising titles of princes, it proposes to perpetuate the tyrannical and undemocratic system of the Government entailing unchecked exploitation of the masses which exists in the native states.

"(3) that it safeguards and acquiesces in the exploitation of human and material resources of India by foreign capital.

"(4) that it guarantees and allows enjoyment of all titles to the private and personal property acquired by questionable means which perpetuates exploitation of the masses.

"(5) that it guarantees the payment of all foreign state debts.

"(6) that it proposes to place armed forces of the country under the control of a committee which will at first consist partly of the British officers, thus depriving the people of their inherent right of self-defence.

"(7) that it proposes to give executive powers and power of veto to the Governor-General and Governors, nominated by the King, thus depriving the Indian people of their foreign rights.

"This Congress therefore declares that its aim is the attainment of complete national independence, based on political, economic and social equality entirely free from British Imperialism."

Mr. Nimbkar said that the speeches of Pt. Jawaharlal and Mr. Jamandas Mehta had put the issue clearly. The Delhi Resolution was a compromise. There could not be any compromise regarding the ideal. The Nehru report would perpetuate slavery. Mahatmaji referred to the Delhi resolution. In view of Mahatmaji's remark, he would ask the house to respect the amendment. The Classes were going to compromise with Imperialism. It was the masses that were going to fight Imperialism. The Nehru Report was called the child of the congress, but the child that was going to cut their throat should be killed. The country knew the incidents connected with the Simon Commission to which they had given one martyr in the death of Lalaji. If they were to be consistent with the boycott of the Simon Commission, they could not present the Report.

He referred to the Non-co-operation movement which he said had turned thousands of youngmen into beggars. It was a pity that they had to learn the lessons of Dominion Status from Gandhiji, the inaugurator of Non-co-operation movement. From his experience of the masses he felt that the masses were ready to fight the battle of freedom, while Mahatmaji was not. Dominion Status was a compromise of the bourgeoisie with Imperialism to exploit the masses of the country. They wanted to fight these classes. They wanted to see the workers and peasants who formed 90 per cent. of the population to achieve independence.

Sardar Sardul SINGH moving his amendment said that he was prepared to give a fair trial to the British Government. If it be accepted, India would enjoy equal position with the other dominions. If not, she would go further. He wanted complete independence to be the goal of India; but if the British Government accepted the Nehru Report, the Congress would approve of it as a substantial advance.

The Mahatma might hope for reforming England but the Sardar felt he had no such hope or energy. He did not believe that Pt. Motilal or the Mahatma were less revolutionary than the younger generation. It was a libel to say so. But they were thinking of the convention. He however appealed to both the parties to yield and work shoulder to shoulder.

Dr. Annie BESANT in moving the following amendment to omit the words "whilst adhering to the resolution relating to complete independence passed by the Madras Congress" also "omit the para of two provisos and para 4" said that the question she was to address the house was fundamental to the whole discussion in the congress and was the basis on which the country

was to work. Attempts were being made to bring about a compromise between the two principles, fundamentally opposed to each other. The compromise between the two irreconcilable ideals was impossible. It was not accurate to say and she hoped Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru would not contradict her when she said that in dealing with Dominion Status, they were dealing with imperialism. As for illustration, she cited the case of Australia where a law had been enacted, giving the Indian immigrants the same rights as the natives of Australia; she did not mean the aborigines but the Europeans settled there. If they achieved Dominion Status, they would be masters in their own territory only. They would have no right to make treaties with the foreign powers. One advantage of linking India with the other groups of Dominion would be that whatever rights and privileges the English Dominions enjoyed would be enjoyed by her. Dominion Status meant complete sovereignty within your territory. You would have your own army and navy and complete control over your own affairs and the connecting link with Great Britain would be for appointing the Governors and Governor-General. They would have the right to levy taxes, make law and carry on other businesses.

So far as the right to make treaties with foreign nations and appointing ambassadors was concerned, even Canada had her ambassadors in Washington and Paris. All other advantages of freedom would be enjoyed by India having Dominion Status.

She then referred to the speech of Deshbandhu at Faridpur and said that the ideal of federation of nation was better than isolated independence. She knew and had worked to remove the sufferings of the people. It was for the people she wanted Dominion Status. They must work the Nehru Report for what they were worth and get freedom and salvation.

"Mr. Gouri Sankar Misra then moved the following amendment :—

"This Congress while declaring complete Independence to be the goal of the Indian people is of opinion that the recommendations of the Nehru Report are a great step forward politically and therefore adopts them generally.

"This Congress while congratulating the framers of the Nehru Report calls upon all Congressmen to help the materialisation of the Nehru constitution without in any way prejudicing the cause of complete independence, i. e., the goal of the Congress. In case the Nehru constitution is not conceded by the 31st Dec. 1930, the Congress shall revive non-violent non-co-operation including the non-payment of taxes against the Government, believing full well that all political parties and organisations represented on the Convention shall take part in the said movement for the attainment of complete independence for India."

He said that this resolution omitted the portion relating to petitioning to the Viceroy which was surreptitiously introduced by some Doctors and Knights who had joined them after many years. He claimed for his resolution that it gave the amplest latitude for the believers in Independence to work for independence during these two years and also to the Dominion Statuswallas "while omitting the portion relating to begging and petitioning to the Viceroys."

At this stage the President announced that the Subjects Committee stood adjourned till 7 p. m. in the evening after the Convention had met.

In the evening, after half an hour's sitting, however, the Subjects Committee again adjourned. It was the briefest possible sitting.

Proceedings commenced an hour later as Pandit Motilal was engaged with the Moslem League members on the question of communal settlement. At the beginning of the meeting a resolution was moved by Mr. Niranjana Patnaik for adjournment of the house till the Convention had finished its labours, but after Pandit Motilal had explained, the mover withdrew his resolution. Other minor amendments were then taken up and some of which were withdrawn. One of them asked the Congress to wait till Dec. 1st of 1930 instead of 31st December so that the Congress might decide the line of action that year in case of non-acceptance of the Nehru Report by the British Parliament. The Mahatma attended the Subjects Committee only a few minutes before adjournment which was done after consultation with him.

## THIRD DAY—28TH DECEMBER 1928

On this day Mahatma Gandhi made a fervent appeal to the house to accept his new resolution on Dominion Status which had been agreed to by all parties. Before doing so he begged leave of the House to withdraw the original motion which had been moved in the Subjects Committee the previous day. The Mahatma observed :—

"I beg for leave to withdraw the resolution which I had the honour of moving the other day and to which so many amendments have already been moved. I know that in asking for this permission, I owe to the House an apology. You have been put to considerable inconvenience and trouble. A great deal of time has been given to the consideration of those amendments. I was almost going to say a great deal of time has been wasted ; but on second consideration I say that it would not be proper to call it a waste of time to have considered those amendments. Those amendments and the resolution which I have asked for permission to withdraw will to a certain extent enable you to understand the condition of many of the national workers. It is perfectly correct to insist upon permission being granted for the withdrawal of the resolution to which I attached a great deal of importance. National life is a perpetual struggle whilst it is growing. It is a struggle not only against the environment that seeks to crush us ; it is also a struggle within our own ranks. Often, the struggle within our own ranks is more prolonged, more exacting and even more bitter than the struggle against environment which is outside of ourselves.

## PANDIT JAWAHARLAL'S ABSENCE EXPLAINED

"You may depend upon it that we, those who were behind the resolution which will be withdrawn if you will give permission, and those who were behind the principal amendment if I may so call Pandit Jawaharlal's amendment, put our heads together and wanted to avoid a conflict. Mr. Sambamurti was surprised why Pandit Jawaharlal was not here to-day. I propose to take you into the secret. He was not in sympathy with much that was going on in our midst. He has become impatient to throw off the yoke. All the twenty-four hours of the day he simply broods upon the grievances of his countrymen. He is impatient to remove the grinding pauperism of the masses. He is impatient against capitalists who are exploiting the masses in the country, who rule over this country, and exploit and bleed this country in the words used by the late Lord Salisbury. I may tell you frankly that he is not in sympathy even with this resolution which I seek to substitute for the resolution which will be withdrawn if you give permission. He thinks that this resolution itself falls far short of what he wants. He is a high-souled man. He does not want to create unnecessary bitterness of words. He seeks deliverance out of it by putting a self-imposed silence upon himself. Hence you find that, although he is a faithful and diligent Secretary of the Congress, he feels that it is better for him this morning to absent himself than to be a helpless witness to the proceedings with which he is not in agreement.

"I have come to move the resolution because I do not share Pandit Jawaharlal's despondence, whilst I share the intensity of his grief for the pauperism of the country and for the slavery which is grinding us down. Pandit Jawaharlal has struck out a path for himself. In pursuing that path, he places his duty to the country before him first, and his duty to his father next. Now you understand why he is absent. You will also understand why I have to perform the painful duty of withdrawing the resolution which I moved the other day, and I do so not because I am sorry for the resolution, not because I am not in love with the resolution, not because this resolution which I want now to move is a better resolution by any means, and not because this resolution is far superior to the other. Our life is a perpetual struggle against the oppressing environment, a perpetual struggle against ourselves. And if we are to stand as united whole, there must be constant adjustment and readjustment, a series of compromises honourable to both parties.

"The differences on principles are few and far between. When we come to think of them, many of the things which we call by the name of principles are no more principles than many details which we do not call principles. Therefore, this resolution is the result of an attempt on the part of parties in this House interested in the resolution that I move and in the principal amendment. It is the

result of a compromise between them, the result of a series of adjustments and readjustments. Hence, I feel I am doing nothing wrong in asking the House for permission to withdraw the other resolution although I consider it to be far superior to this resolution which I shall presently move before you.

"I ask for your leave to withdraw that resolution because I think national interest will be better served if the resolution which I consider to be inferior to the other is moved and adopted. It serves the national purpose better because it will hold all the parties together instead of dividing them. Even if the House were divided on the other resolution and we had won, what would that victory have been worth if it meant increased bitterness, if it meant weakening of national unity ?

#### MEANING OF INDEPENDENCE

"There are in our midst to-day men who do not want to stop at anything, and who have ceased to think of anything short of full liberty to the country. What am I to say to them ? May I say to them : I shall no longer go along with you because I consider my proposition is better and therefore you have to work out your own destiny without my service. Then they say : "It is for that purpose we have gathered in this House. We could also have said the same thing to you. We want your services." I could not resist the appeal without stultifying myself and degrading myself. So I think it is better to take up this resolution as a substitute for the other. I beg leave to move this resolution with all the force at my command and with all the insistence that I put upon the original resolution. This resolution therefore becomes really for the time being superior to the resolution that I moved the other day. Hence I ask for your leave to withdraw the other resolution, and let me put before you this resolution for your consideration and I hope you will give the permission.

"I have taken you into the secret and I have given you a summary of what had happened to induce me to withdraw the resolution. If you feel that you do not want that resolution to be withdrawn, if you care to take that responsibility upon your shoulders, you may say 'no' and the resolution cannot be withdrawn. Then it would be tantamount to your voting for that resolution, and that resolution will be considered and the amendments to that resolution will be considered and voted upon. I warn you again not to take that serious responsibility. Even the principal amendment of Pandit Jawaharlal was the result of a series of compromises. Even that fell far short of what Pandit Jawaharlal held to be dear to him. If you still think you will shoulder the responsibility, and you consider the interest of the country will be better served by not allowing me to withdraw that resolution, you can shoulder that responsibility. But consider what it means. I now beg leave of the house to withdraw that resolution."

A member on a point of order, stated that to allow M. Gandhi to make a speech in withdrawing the resolution was against the recognised practice.

Pandit Matilal replied that he would permit Pandit Malaviya to oppose the original resolution.

Pandit MALAVIYA said : "The very considerations which have led the Mahatma to decide upon withdrawal, constrain me to tender my opposition to that motion. I entirely realise the feeling of the younger men among us. I honour them for their sincerity. If they think that the British connection should cease to-day I honour them for a courage to say it. But I have still to judge the matter from the point of view of what will best serve the interests of the country—which the older men and younger men have both equally at heart. This resolution which the Mahatma put originally before you was the result of a compromise.

Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar : "This is absolutely wrong."

Mr. Satyamurti : "The voting in the Working Committee was five to four.

Pandit Malaviya : The resolution, I maintain, was the result of negotiations which took place in the house of the president.

Mr. Srinivas Iyengar : I was present, and I contradict this most emphatically. Shouts of "no no" came from a section of the audience.

Pandit Malaviya : The resolution was drafted by Mahatmaji after discussions in which Pandit Motilal, Mr. Sen Gupta, Pandit Jawaharlal and Mr. Srinivas

Iyengar took part. That resolution was arrived at to bring about the utmost unity in the Congress for work in the country. It adhered to the resolution passed at Madras. There was thus a clear recognition of the fact that there was no desire that that resolution be departed from. The resolution further gives the British Parliament two years' time to consider whether they will accept the proposal put forward by the Congress. Now you have changed it to one year. You also introduced another important clause. While the original resolution gave liberty to familiarise the people with the goal of national independence without coming into conflict with the ideal of Dominion Status, you have given authority to the Independence section to preach it in the name of the Congress. And Mahatmaji has told you that Pandit Jawaharlal is not satisfied with that resolution.

Mr. Srinivas Iyengar : If this resolution is accepted he will withdraw his amendment.

Pandit Malaviya : I can understand those who are for complete Independence saying that they do not want to give any more time, but when you have considered it politic to have one year before you declare independence, why should you not be agreeable to allow two years to the British Parliament? (A voice : Why not hundred years?) When you have given a year, you have given it in the hope, it may seem to be a forlorn hope, that you may be able to persuade the Government or bring pressure to bear on it to yield. (A voice : No, no, we want unity).

#### A POINT OF ORDER

Sirdar Sardul Singh : Is it fair for Pandit Malaviya to discuss on the merits the resolution about which Mahatmaji has not said a word on merits?

Pandit Malaviya : There is a section of opinion in the country which considers that the wisest and most patriotic course in the circumstances is to press for acceptance of Dominion Status.

Mr. Satyamurti : I want your ruling, Sir, whether the Pandit's speech is not only out of order, but grossly unfair to the Mahatma if he goes on putting arguments before the resolution is moved.

Pandit Matilal asked Pandit Malaviya to confine himself to the reasons against substituting the new resolution.

Pandit Malaviya : I am trying to remind you that not only those who are in favour of complete Independence but also those who are in favour of Dominion Status are actuated by a desire to serve the country and do the best for it. I possess a ceaseless desire to see the end of the present system of government and its substitution by the government of the people, by the people, for the people. (Applause). My anxiety to serve the best interest makes me believe that the course outlined in the first resolution was the wisest course, and I feel that if the other resolution is substituted in order to satisfy a party which wants to work for complete Independence, then you will alienate a very large body of opinion which is now supporting us. We have attained considerable unity at the All-Parties Conference, and that unity rests on the basis of Dominion Status being our immediate goal. You will alienate a lot of people whose joining has strengthened the position in the country. You will also create fresh difficulty by driving away such men to the other side. You will also have a greater difficulty on the subject of Indian Princes, and you are making the task unnecessarily difficult whereas the principles in the first resolution gave you as reasonable an attitude as you could wish for. Mahatmaji has told you that the first resolution is far superior, and he has said that in the present circumstances the new resolution is superior. I differ from him in the latter view. I am anxious that those who want to work with us, should not be asked in that way to be committed to the view that propaganda shall be carried on for independence in the name of the Congress. You will thereby drive away the sympathy of a large body men.

A voice : How many are they?

Pandit Malaviya : Even one man counts for many (voices : oh, oh). The resolution of the Mahatma went far enough. Some of our friends were not satisfied with it, but I promised to stand by it, because I thought it was taking a reasonable attitude in saying that while adhering to the goal of Independence we wanted to give two years' time to the other side to either accept or reject our proposal on the

basis of Dominion Status, which, to my mind, grants practically complete Independence. But of course, the position in the country would lead to the possibility and almost the certainty of more and more people breaking away from us. That will not improve the chances of getting freedom. I will ask the house not to give permission to the Mahatma to withdraw his original resolution, for thereby you shall be drawing in a very large and growing number of men on our side. (A voice—Have you not alienated the sympathy of the Simon worshipper? (Laughter).

Pandit Motilal then put to vote Mahatma Gandhi's request for withdrawal of the original resolution, which was granted by an overwhelming majority, only four dissenting.

M. Gandhi then moved his new resolution :—

#### The New Resolution.

"This Congress having considered the constitution recommended by the All-Parties Committee Report welcomes it as a great contribution towards the solution of India's political and communal problems and congratulates the Committee on the unanimity of its recommendations and whilst adhering to the resolution relating to Complete Independence passed at the Madras Congress approves of the constitution drawn up by the Committee as a great step in political advance, specially as it represents the largest measure of agreement attained among the important parties in the country.

"Subject to the exigencies of political situation, this Congress will adopt the constitution, if it is accepted in its entirety by the British Parliament on or before the 31st December, 1929 but in the event of its non-acceptance by that date or its earlier rejection, the Congress will organise a campaign of non-violent non-co-operation by advising the country to refuse taxation and in such other manner as may be decided upon.

"Consistently with the above, nothing in this resolution shall interfere with carrying on in the name of the Congress of propaganda for complete Independence."

M. Gandhi said that his brain was muddled, because he was dragged last night by Pandit Motilal to the Convention Committee, which did not adjourn till 2-30 in the morning. After that he could not go to sleep. Commending his resolution he said :

I want you, first, to consider what has been omitted from the original resolution. It is necessary to do so in order to commend to your attention the resolution which has been accepted by two fairly large parties in this House. There may be a few who will vote against it. My purpose is not merely to get this resolution passed. That is the least important part of it: but my purpose is to direct your attention upon what is expected of you, what is expected of the party which is instrumental in having the first resolution watered down.

You will find a glaring omission for which I am sorry, that relating to sending the resolution to the Viceroy. Whilst I was drawing up that clause, I knew, when it would be read to you, some of you would be shocked, and say to yourself: "You too a Non-cooperator?" But as a non-co-operator I am proud of that clause, and if you could even now restore it I shall gladly do so. Do you know how pressed some of us are for time? I had not even time to discuss the reasons for putting down that clause in the resolution which friends here have cut down. I said to myself when I drew up that clause that if I discover reluctance on your part, I would withdraw it. I did it as a non-co-operator and I want the House to understand the implication of non-co-operation and also the implication of that resolution.

This resolution is a challenge. It is open to the British Government to interpret this as an insolent challenge if they wish. We would not be afraid of that. But if there is the slightest trace of a change of heart of the government then they will understand it as the yearning of a nation which is trying to throw off thralldom. But if they cannot put the right interpretation we cannot help. But, as I have said, if it is a challenge it is also an address. I am not frightened of going to the House of Commons or even going to the Viceroy. I will go there only when it is honourable to do so, and on terms

of equality, and that would be consistent with my creed of non-co-operation. I non-co-operate with evil. I do not non-co-operate with good. I do not non-co-operate with persons. I non-co-operate with measures and with system.

Continuing, M. Gandhi said : "If the Viceroy to-day asks me to go to him and discuss things of importance on a footing of equality I would go there bare-foot and post-haste, and still defend my non-co-operation. If you only work this resolution, you will hasten that time and anticipate the date of the adoption of Dominion Status. So, it is possible for you to receive a summons from the Viceroy to go to the House of Commons. Then you will go as non-co-operators and not as co-operators. You will go as national delegates in order to come to some reasonable terms over our demands. It won't be then a matter of something which is dictated to us or which is given to us by the House of Commons to be received as beggars but it will even as South Africa went and became a high contracting party. General Smuts and General Botha went on behalf of South Africa and they gallantly and bravely put forward the case of their country extorting the admiration of the King himself, so much so that the King sent a message stating : "I do not want to fight any more with these gallant people." That is how General Smuts and General Botha went as ambassadors of their nation to England. They went as delegates to vindicate their honour and gain their liberty, not on terms dictated by the House of Commons, but on terms settled by the Convention in South Africa.

M. Gandhi asked : Have we got the brains and bravery and determination of General Botha or of General Smuts who was prepared to sacrifice his own valuable property. If we had then I would not be here from out of my Sabarmati.

Dr. Pattavi asked me why I was coquetting with the Swaraj Party and was in lingering love with Pandit Motilal Nehru. It was not lingering love, but burning love for a dear comrade. Pandit Motilal Nehru wrote to me that I was instrumental in putting the crown of thorns on his head and might even have to see how many bruises had been created and even to share some of those bruises. I would be guilty of a breach of friendship and breach of duty to the nation if after having pressed him to take the chair at this critical juncture in the history of the nation I had not responded to his call and said : "Yes, I shall come on the date you fix, and I shall leave when you give me permission." You can now understand why I am in Calcutta.

Proceeding, M. Gandhi regretted that the clause about submission of the Nehru Report to the Viceroy was not there, and said : "To-day we are suffering from the inferiority complex. We have King Charles' head dangling before our eyes. The brand of inferiority is marked on our forehead, and we scent danger lest we might be weakening ourselves. I say : no. We are strengthening ourselves. It is a piece of courtesy that we owe to ourselves to submit a copy of the report and resolution to the Viceroy ; although as some papers have put it, it is an ultimatum. I expect those who are trustees for the honour of the British nation to understand the implications of this resolution which expresses the yearnings of a nation. If we do not send the resolution, the British Government or the Viceroy will turn round and say : "We do not know anything about your resolution."

The All-Parties Constitution is not to be submitted to the Simon Commission, but certainly it is a document to be considered by the Viceroy and by the Imperial Government and those who are to-day supposed to be ruling the destinies of India. It has been drafted for that purpose. Otherwise, it will be meaningless. It is a charter of Independence as much as we can accommodate ourselves to-day. Whilst I ask you not to draw any distinction between Dominion Status and Independence, still I call it a Charter of Independence, because that is your demand. You do not mean to say that it should be put into a treasury. It is a document, in my opinion, to be circulated firstly among the Viceroy and the Governors, so that they can have no excuse to say that they did not know about it. The same I did in regard to Bardoli. I wrote a letter addressed to the Viceroy ; but within twenty-four hours of that letter, I had the painful duty of withdrawing it, and reshaping it as I considered this was necessary because of further events. If I was suffering from the fever of inferiority complex, I could have given an interview to a press representative and expected the Viceroy to send me an answer. But I took the proper course. Similarly,



I want to take the proper course in regard to this resolution, for thereby you will not weaken but strengthen your case. If you are going to do anything at all, I again repeat that the Nehru Report has got to be considered by the British Parliament, and by the Viceroy if it is to result in anything whatsoever. The authors of the Nehru Report knew it. You know it and I know it. It would be a sign of weakness not to recognise it. If the Viceroy is a worthy representative of his King and his nation, he will take note of this resolution even though it does not contain the clause which I should have liked to be inserted. But from this platform I declare that if he cares to read my remarks which I do convey to him, then it will be proper for him to take this resolution to heart and to understand that at least some of us mean to vindicate every word of what is contained in it, (Hear, hear.) If you cry "hear, hear," then I ask you to restore that clause for submission to the Viceroy. (Cries of "no, no.") If you say "no," then I say you are suffering from inferiority complex. I have had some experience of it myself in South Africa where I was addressed as a cooly.

Proceeding, M. Gandhi referred to the fixing of the date of 31st December 1929 as the date by which the British Government should accept or reject the constitution. The original resolution put down the 31st December 1930. He observed: "So many friends came and asked me, if I voted for the resolution whether I would take virtual control of national affairs. I confess I have not got the strength to do this single-handed, but I will, if you come to terms with me, and if you bear the yoke. The yoke will be much heavier than what it was in 1920. It will be a seasoned yoke which has become stronger by usage. If you give the discipline that I demand, I shall give as much as this frail body can give. You cannot expect from me anything unless these inexorable terms are granted by you at your own accord. It will be no use asking me to take control unless you mean every word of what you say.

Therefore in the face of all these, I thought two years was short enough time to rally and organise our forces in order to give battle. If we must give battle to the Government, you will really require one year to create discipline in our ranks and have thousands of members on the Congress roll. Our Congress roll to-day is a bogus show. If I went as an inspector to examine the books of the Congress it will be a sad disappointment. We want a living register of Congress members and we want to be in a position to enrol more and more every week just in the same manner and with the same enthusiasm as was witnessed in regard to the Tilak Swaraj Fund collections. We want one year more for giving ourselves confidence and courage and for dedicating ourselves to the work of consolidation of communal unity.

Communal unity is not yet in sight. It is buried in the Nehru Report. The whole of last night was given to discussing the communal question and it appears we may have to rewrite the pages devoted to the communal problem. Heaven forbid such a course. But we do want some time for the atmosphere to clear before we are ready to give battle. I think two years will be too short a time.

Discussing the question of approval of the Nehru Report M. Gandhi said:—We must not treat the report as something separate from independence. You are saying that the constitution drawn up by the Committee is a great step to political advance, and I say it also incorporates independence and I say you must incorporate it in your programme of struggle for independence. And therefore when you harangue upon independence, it will be your duty, if you are to be true to this resolution of approval of the constitution, to say that you stand for independence in terms of this resolution. Do not consider this report as an excrescence to be deplored. The authors of the report whose labour you appreciate in this resolution have discharged their trust on behalf of those who want independence and nothing less. The independence-wallahs have nothing to be ashamed of in the Nehru Report. You may call these observations of mine as a case of special pleading. Every word of what I say comes out of the deepest recesses of my heart although my brain is muddled. I, therefore, ask you to accept this resolution, but not as a consolation prize for Pandit Motilal Nehru, for he does not stand in need of it after the magnificent ride over thirty-four horses.

"I want the drops of your lifeblood to mingle with mine, the drops of Hindu blood to mingle with drops of blood of the Mussalmans and Sikhs and Parsis, so that a magnificent memorial can be raised in Calcutta if you like to show what this nation has done in order to earn liberty."

Referring to the expression the "exigencies of the political situation" M. Gandhi pointed out that it was again an interpolation from the old name, the inferiority complex. "Supposing the Viceroy loses his head or the Secretary of State loses his head and says: what, these insolent men flinging this insult against a nation and demanding Dominion Status at the point of the bayonet?" If they say this, and if they misread the yearnings of the Indian nation and imprison some of us, and if supposing on the day of the Simon Commission's official arrival in Calcutta, some Superintendent of Police in the discharge of his duties tries to do what he thinks right, then what are you to do? Are we to sit still and say: 'Yes; we can accept Dominion Status.' No, weak as we are, we may summon sufficient courage to say: No more Dominion Status. But that does not require to be provided for in this resolution, and that would have been an answer to the Nehru Report. If the Simon Commission reads these signs aright, it will see that the country stands by the Nehru Report.

Of course, there is no hope for the Commission to read signs aright. And I am not such a simpleton as to believe it. But I am also an irresistible optimist. If the Hindus and Mussalmans and Sikhs determine to shed cowardice and say that they stand by the Nehru Report in terms of this resolution and march side by side towards the goal, then, I promise, Sir John Simon will take the cue, and say: I understand the Indian situation better than any other man. "But to-day" said M. Gandhi, "we have not got that atmosphere of trust and self-confidence. But the key lies in the resolution which I have placed before you"

Mr. Srinivasa IYENGAR, in supporting M. Gandhi's resolution, said :

"We shall wait for one year and see whether the Government accepts the compromise resolution. They may not accept our resolution; but we must see we do not put ourselves in the wrong or put any section of Congressmen in the wrong. The Congress goal of independence is not suspended and propaganda for independence is not suspended either. If there is acceptance by the British Government of the constitution, then our adoption is subject to the further safeguard of the exigencies of the political situation. The independence school will loyally work out the compromise trusting in reciprocal obligations of the other side. The propaganda for independence must have as a part of it, propaganda for the Nehru Report."

The speaker knew that those who were for complete independence would be dissatisfied with the compromise resolution. But it must not be forgotten that those who were for Dominion Status were not satisfied either. But if disruption was to be avoided, it was most advisable that a compromise must be reached. This resolution was one such, with a view to bring about harmony and weld both schools into one of complete national independence. He emphasised that the acceptance of the Nehru Constitution must be in entirety. Their programme was clear. If only M. Gandhi made the necessary adjustments in his programme of non-co-operation he would be able to lead the country to success.

Dr. Annie BESANT objected to the second clause of the resolution. It was stated that if the Nehru Constitution is not adopted, the Congress would organise Non-co-operation including non-payment of taxes. She also objected to the third clause where Independence was permitted to be preached in the name of the Congress. She complained that she had been in the meeting from nine o'clock and so far only one side of the case had been presented and the other side had not been fairly treated. She reminded them of the part which she and others took in the beginning of the year at the sacrifice of leisure and money in laying the foundation of the report as well as in popularising the recommendations. But there was no opportunity of making a reasoned speech in favour of that report in their meeting where a good deal of time had been taken up to the advocacy of the so-called compromise motion introducing the non-co-operation movement as part of the substantive resolution. It gave everything to one side and practically nothing to the other.

Dr Besant's fundamental objection to the resolution was that they could not get Independence without altering the creed of the Congress. The present creed was Swaraj by all peaceful and legitimate means. If they passed this resolution

it would necessitate a change of creed and break the Congress into pieces no matter what they might say. She admitted that the Independence party had a perfect right to carry on propaganda. At the same time those who stood for Dominion Status had an equal right to do propaganda for the Nehru Report. But this resolution permitted the Independence party to do propaganda in the name of the Congress. Independence could give them nothing more than what could be obtained under Dominion Status, and while Independence could not be got except by fighting for which the Indians were not prepared Dominion status could be had by constitutional means. If they changed the Congress creed into independence, those who stood for Swaraj by peaceful means could not be within it. By this resolution the whole aspect was changed, and they were putting the country on fire. (a voice : Is it so ?) Independence, she said, could be got only—

Mr. Srinivasa Iyenger : By non-violent pressure.

Mrs. Besant : I don't believe in it. It was tried and it failed.

A voice : What about Bardoli ?

Mrs. Besant : Yes, Bardoli did not proclaim anything, but it set to work. Here we are proclaiming a lot.

Mr. Srinivasa Iyenger : Did you not suggest in the Convention that there should be a parallel form of Government ?

Mrs. Besant : Yes. I am prepared to go on saying so.

Referring to acceptance by the Congress of the Nehru Report being conditional on acceptance of it by Great Britain, Mrs. Besant said : Why on earth should the British Parliament do the work which we have to do ? You misunderstand the British Parliament very seriously, if you think they will do work when we don't do our own and we don't send a bill to Parliament.

Mr. Kandaswami Chetti : Ah, the cat is out of the bag.

Mrs. Besant : You say in this resolution, that subject to the exigencies of the political situation you will adopt the constitution. Who is to be the Judge ?

Mr. Satyamurti : Of course, the Congress.

Mrs. Besant : Who is going to introduce a bill in Parliament by way of acceptance of the report ?

Mr. Satyamurti : The Premier.

Mrs. Besant : Who is going to draft your bill for it ?

Mr. Satyamurti : There is the Attorney-General.

Mrs. Besant : When the British Parliament has adopted your bill, the whole thing is done and what has the Congress to do ? There is no need for any further action on its part.

Proceeding, Mrs. Besant entirely disagreed with the idea of starting non-co-operation and refusal of payment of taxes.

Continuing, Mrs. Besant said she had learnt the lesson in politics that, in such a campaign as non-co-operation, it was not the leaders who suffered but the poor defenceless masses. People would get their lands confiscated and their cattle sold off by the Revenue Officer, and their peasantry would be defenceless. For starting non-co-operation, there must be a common grievance as was the case in South Africa where M. Gandhi succeeded, but in a vast country like India, it was difficult to organise a mass revolt.

A voice : The common grievance is our bondage.

Mrs. Besant retorted : Don't think that you are being kept down by England.

Continuing, Mrs. Besant explained her idea of a parallel Government by organisation of village panchayats and concluded that if the Independence section wanted to carry on propaganda in the name of the Congress then the Dominion Status section also should have equal freedom to do propaganda in the name of the Congress.

Pandit Motilal Nehru : You have got it.

Mrs. Besant concluded : Pandit Motilal says to me that we have permission to carry on a campaign for Dominion Status in the name of the Congress. I have nothing more to say.

Mr. NIMBKAR pressed for the Delhi compromise resolution moved by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru on the ground that if the British Parliament accepted the Nehru Report, the Congressmen would not work for Independence.

Mr. Sarat BOSE stressed the same point. Supposing the British Government accepts the Nehru Report, will Congressmen be permitted to go on with their work to achieve the goal of Independence. (Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar and Pandit Motilal Nehru: Yes, yes.) But according to this resolution if the Nehru Report is accepted by the British Parliament, then the Congress also accepts it and your goal of Independence vanishes. (Cries of "Yes, yes" and "no, no.")

Mr. Sarat Bose doubted if Parliament would grant Dominion Status unless they demand complete Independence. But this resolution introduced an atmosphere of unreality and made Congressmen grope in dark. It enveloped the Madras Independence resolution by camouflage destroying the faith of the people in their object.

Motion [Carried By 118 Votes Against 45]

At this stage, Dr. Besant was seen leaving the meeting. It was 1-30 and closure was successfully applied. All the amendments to the resolution both the original and the substitute, were either lost by an over-whelming majority or withdrawn. Dr. Besant's amendment, put to vote in her absence, had half-a-dozen supporters.

Before the compromise resolution was put to vote Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose made a short statement. He said that he was asked by his younger friends to make his position clearer. He stated that he had no desire to stand in the way of the older leaders and for that reason, so far as he was concerned, he would not vote against the resolution. Proceeding he commented on the resolution which was cut short by the President pointing out that no speech could be made.\*

Finally, the resolution was carried by 118 against 45 votes amidst loud applause. The Bengal section were either opposed to the resolution or remained neutral. The Mahratta block voted against it, because it generally stood for Dominion Status.

#### Mr. S. C. Bose's Statement.

\*The following statement was subsequently issued by Mr. Subhas Bose to the press:—

"I had no desire to speak anything or to say anything on the new resolution moved by Mahatma Gandhi at yesterday's Subjects Committee meeting. But I have been pressed by several young friends to give expression to my views on the resolution and incidentally to give utterances to their views in so far as they are in consonance with mine. I wanted to have my say and actually sent in a note to the President but owing to the closure motion being carried I was prevented from doing so. Later on, I attempted to make my position clear by means of a statement, but unfortunately I was gagged by the President.

"I would like to make it perfectly clear at the outset that so far as I am concerned I do not desire to vote against the resolution or to stand in the way of our older leaders. Nevertheless it is my duty to say exactly what we in Bengal and, I believe, the younger and progressive section in the Congress feel and think on the matter. In the first place I fail to understand why the resolution passed in the All-India Congress Committee at Delhi was given the go-by by Pandit Motilal Nehru. That resolution represented an honourable compromise between the two schools in the Congress and Panditji was a party to that compromise. The younger school were not altogether satisfied with that resolution but they accepted it as a compromise in the larger interests of the country. Mahatmajji considers that resolution to be self-contradictory. We venture to think that if that resolution is self-contradictory, Mahatmajji's new resolution is not less so. A reference to the last paragraph in the resolution will bear out this statement.

"The implication of the resolution is that if the British Government accept the constitution on or before the 31st December, 1929, the Congress will adopt it and thereby commit itself definitely to Dominion Status. This is a position to which we

can never agree. Even if Dominion Status is conceded to-day, we cannot accept it as a fulfilment of our National demand. We stand for "Independence" not in the distant future to be as our immediate objective. The cleavage between the two wings in the Congress is, therefore, fundamental. We in Bengal had great hopes that among the older leaders at least Pandit Motilal Nehru would be with the younger school, and take upon himself the task of leading and guiding them. But for the time being that expectation has not been fulfilled. But we still hope that ere long he will be whole-heartedly with us.

"Everybody realises, and our older leaders also do so, that we shall not get even Dominion Status however unanimous our demand may be, unless we are able to devise sanctions. The resolution in question does not mention any sanction. The campaign of Non-co-operation is to be organised not for the purpose of enforcing our demand but in the event of non-acceptance of it by the British Government on or before the 31st December or in the event of its earlier rejection. Unless the campaign of Non-co-operation or some other effective sanction is resorted to at once, it is sure, as the Sun rises in the East, that our demand even for Dominion Status will be rejected with contempt by the British Government.

"Mahatmaji's moving the resolution has created an impression in certain quarters that he is going to take up the leadership, as he did in 1920. This has led many members of the All-India Congress Committee to vote for the resolution. No body would be more happy than myself if Mahatmaji could be persuaded to take the lead. I have myself begged him more than once to take up the leadership. When I had been to the Sabarmaty Ashram a few months ago I assured him that the time had come for bold lead and that the entire younger generation was anxiously waiting for it. From what fell from his lips in Calcutta the other day in reply to a straight question I put to him, I doubt if Gandhiji will take upon himself the task of creating the sanctions for enforcing India's National demand in the same manner in which he did in 1920.

"What we feel most acutely is that at a most critical juncture in our history our older leaders have failed to rise to the occasion. After the death of Lala Lajpat Rai and the manner in which it was brought about, after the happenings at Lucknow and Cawnpore and at other places, after the speech of His Excellency the Viceroy, we would have expected our leaders to respond to the attitude of the Government in a fitting manner by adopting a policy, at once bold and defiant. Unfortunately, we have been presented with a resolution which does not inspire anyone, which makes no appeal to man's highest emotions and aspirations. And even this unsatisfactory resolution our older leaders were made to agree to the greatest difficulty.

"The resolution when it goes out to the world will have a damping effect on the souls of the younger generations and the effect of it will be that at least for some time to come, the Youth Congress and the Independence League will become more real and more living bodies. As the Labour Party in England drew away the most active and virile elements from the Liberal Party by the adoption of a more progressive policy, so also will the Indian Youth Congress and the Independence for India League attract the progressive minds in the Congress. A comparison between a sitting of the All-Parties Convention and a sitting of the Youth Congress in the same Pandal will clearly show which way the wind blows. It is regrettable that our older leaders do not fully realise what the younger generation think and feel and how rapidly they have advanced within the last few years.

"Our task at the moment is quite clear. We cannot waste our time and energy by quarrelling with those with whose views we may be at variance. We have to carry on our work according to our light and the dictates of our conscience. Even if the ideal of our older leaders fall short of ours, we are prepared to co-operate with them whole-heartedly and work under their guidance, if their policies and programmes meet with our approval. In spite of our differences in the world of ideal, it is still possible to have united action in the field of action if only those responsible for the resolution come forward with a fighting programme. Whether their programme of action will come up to our expectation or not, remains to be seen.

"There is another point which many of us may have lost sight of. The effect

of this resolution will be to affect our international prestige and reputation. International opinion is no small asset to a nation. The Madras Congress gave us an added prestige in international politics which the Calcutta Congress is going to destroy. I would like to know how our older leaders are going to compensate us for this loss.

"The responsibility which has been cast on the youths of this country is very great and they have to prepare themselves for the task that lies ahead. My faith in them is unbounded and I have no doubt that if the older leaders fail to rise to the occasion, the younger generation will march ahead and lead the country on to the cherished goal of freedom."

#### FOURTH DAY—29TH DECEMBER 1928

##### DELEGATION TICKETS.

The Subjects Committee met on this day at 8-30 p. m. soon after the Congress which opened on this day was over. (*For proceedings see p. 321.*) Attendance was thin. Mahatma Gandhi was present. At the outset Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru made a statement saying that over 5600 delegates have attended the Congress. It appeared that the Punjab and Burma Congress Committees have issued delegates' tickets in somewhat lavish and generous manner.

As far as the Punjab was concerned, in some cases two or three certificates have been issued in the name of one individual. It might be that if there is any voting in the open session of the Congress to-day Punjab and Burma delegates might have no right to vote. It was stated that a considerable number of delegates' tickets of Burma and Punjab were going round for sale. Some Provinces like Bengal were proceeding on a most erroneous basis. Notwithstanding their full quota of delegates they were issuing tickets to ex-office delegates not included in that full quota.

Sj. Srinivasa Iyengar stated that was the procedure before Gauhati. After the full quota was not reached it was not held legal to issue delegates' tickets to ex-office delegates but after Gauhati that rule had been changed.

Pandit Motilal asked whether there was any number from the Punjab who could explain the matter. Mr. Parushuram, Secretary, Punjab Congress Committee said that the matter could be explained by Mr. Satyapal.

Pandit Jawaharlal stated that even it was constitution to appoint delegates to so large number it was high time for the Congress to modify or change the constitution. The full quota of delegates to 6000 was assured if the Congress wanted to do any serious work. As regards the case of Bengal he confessed he was not aware of such procedure in the Congress constitution. Mr. Pattavi Sitarayama remarked that the whole thing had been jumbled up with the result that tickets of gentlemen had been issued to ladies and of ladies to gentlemen, of Sastri to Maulanas and so on.

Sj. Satyamurthi strongly protested against the remarks of Sj. Pattavi, and deprecated any such charge being made in the presence of the press. They must make formal complaint if there was any to make.

Mr. Pattavi :—"I also deprecate any suppression of truth." He said in fact in the morning one lady approached him with ticket in which she was called a Mr. and was refused admission.

Swami Govindananda formally moved that Pandit Jawaharlal and Sj. Rangaswami Iyengar be appointed to go into the matter and report next morning. A member suggested that Sj. Rangaswami being elected from the Punjab should not investigate into the matter. The President formed a Committee consisting of Sjs. Ballabh Patel and Rangaswami Iyengar to go into the complaints and report on the next day.

#### 3. Resolution on Constructive Programme.

The President then requested Mahatma Gandhi to move his second resolution which ran as follows :—

"The Congress shall engage in the following activities :

"(1) In Legislatures and outside every attempt will be made to bring about total prohibition of intoxicating drugs and drinks. Picketting of liquor and drugs shops shall be organised wherever desirable and possible.

"(2) Inside and outside legislatures methods suited to respective environment shall be immediately adopted to bring about boycott of foreign cloth by advocating and stimulating production and adoption of handspun and handwoven khaddar.

"(3) Specific grievances wherever discovered and where people are ready shall be sought to be redressed by non-violent action as was done recently at Bardoli.

"(4) Members of legislatures returned on congress tickets shall give the bulk of their time to constructive work settled from time to time by the Congress Committee.

"(5) Congress organisation shall be perfected by enlisting members and enforcing stricter discipline.

"(6) Measures shall be taken to remove disabilities of women and they will be invited and encouraged to take their due share in national upbuilding.

"(7) Measures shall be taken to rid the country of social abuses.

"(8) It will be the duty of all Congressmen being Hindus to do all they can to remove untouchability and help so-called untouchables in every possible way in their attempt to remove their disabilities and better their conditions.

"(9) Volunteers shall be enlisted to take up village reconstruction in addition to what is being done through the spinning-wheel and khaddar.

"(10) Such other work as may be deemed advisable in order to advance nation-building in all its departments and in order to enable the Congress to secure co-operation in the national effort of the people engaged in different pursuits.

"In order to finance the activities mentioned in the foregoing programme every Congressman with a monthly income of Rs. 100 and over, shall contribute five per cent of his monthly income provided that in special cases exception may be granted at the discretion of the Working Committee."

Mahatma Gandhi said : "I have no desire to detain the House for many minutes in explaining this resolution. It is plain enough. After what I have listened to for the past half an hour in respect of the irregularities in the delegation register, I can only say that this resolution, providing for a constructive programme, can be worked out only by true Congressmen. It is only by them that the revival of non-co-operation and organisation of non-violence is possible. If you want the Nehru Report to fructify, the least you can do is to work out this resolution with the greatest concentration and with integrity during the ensuing months."

#### MR. SATYAMURTI'S AMENDMENT.

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Mr. Satyamurti moved an amendment in terms of the amendment given notice of originally by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. This included organisation of the people for resistance to foreign domination with a view to devise sanctions to enforce the nation's will and secondly to prepare the country for civil disobedience and non-payment of taxes. It authorised the All-India Congress Committee to fix the date and place where such non-payment may begin or convene a special session of the Congress for the purpose. It laid special emphasis on organisation of the peasantry and workers on the basis of an economic programme, and finally it suggested the levy of a certain percentage of income of every Congressman getting over Rs. 100.

Mr. Satyamurti admitted that this amendment differed very little from the resolution of M. Gandhi, but pointed out the additions which he thought were very necessary in order to enable the country to carry out the programme towards complete independence. M. Gandhi was good enough to mention that if his programme was adopted the Nehru Committee Report would fructify; but he did not say anything about Independence, whereas the compromise resolution of M. Gandhi entailed reciprocal obligations. However, whether the Nehru Constitution was accepted by the Government or not, the goal of the Congress remained the same, namely, independence. It was to enable the country to progress towards that, that the speaker wanted additions to the

programme outlined by Gandhi. He emphasised that the peasantry and workers should be harnessed in the fight for freedom.

#### DR. BESANT EXPLAINS HER ATTITUDE.

Dr. Annie Besant made it clear that her opposition to any preparation for civil disobedience or non-payment of taxes should be taken for granted. She did not want to explain her views every time these subjects were brought forward.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said that he could not support Mr. Satyamurti's amendment although it was part of his original motion, because the first part of his original motion had not been adopted by the House and a different one was now before them. He was however pleased that a 5 per cent contribution was to be levied on the monthly incomes of all Congressmen getting over Rs. 100.

Dr. Pattabhi : That is really socialism.

Pandit Jawaharlal : Socialism is bigger than that. (Laughter.)

A voice : It is at any rate on the way to Socialism.

Pandit Jawaharlal : But my only fear is : How are we to enforce this particular ratio ? There may be a great deal of hypocrisy and suppression of truth, and it may be that the number of members in the Congress roll might dwindle.

Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya opposed Mr. Satyamurti's amendment as he did not want to add to the embarrassments of Gandhiji by introducing the complication of boycott of British goods to which Gandhiji was bitterly opposed.

Mr. V. L. Sastri thought that five per cent subscription could be equitably levied on those getting Rs. 200 and above and not less.

Another delegate suggested the levying of a flat rate of one rupee on every Congressman.

Mr. Joglekar remarked : Is this a bourgeois suggestion ?

Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant thought that one per cent of every Congressman's income would be enough ; for five per cent was too heavy and might not be paid. He added that, even members of Councils who got travelling allowances did not pay subscription to their party.

#### RULE REGARDING KHADDAR WEARING.

Mr. Thangdi of Poona rose to explain his views.

Mr. Doyalji of Surat said that Mr. Thangdi was not in khaddar and therefore had no right to participate in these proceedings. Indeed he had known of several cases of members of the Subjects Committee who did not put on hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar, and yet prided themselves of that.

Pandit Motilal disallowed Mr. Thangdi.

#### M. GANDHI'S REPLY TO THE DEBATE.

Replying to the debate on the amendments the Mahatma spoke with much feeling. He said :

"There are one or two things which can be taken over from Mr. Satyamurti's amendment which was originally moved by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and embodied in my resolution." Here Gandhi glanced through the amendment and said : "I am sorry I thought I could take one or two items, but I have run my eyes through all the clauses in the amendment and I find nothing which I can accept."

Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar : What about the National volunteers ?

M. Gandhi : "A National Volunteers Corps there is already in the country, and I have made a proposal for the effective use of them if they are willing to come forward. As regards the suggestion about the peasantry and workers, I may say that if I had not been engaged in anything else I have been at least engaged in organising the peasantry. I do not know if to-day in this assembly there is any one person who claims greater knowledge of the act of organising the peasantry than myself. It is self-praise, I know, but stating



it is not a matter for self-praise but one of fact. Perhaps, you will accept it from me. Therefore I am not inclined to take over this clause, because its most effective part is already in the original resolution.

There is certainly one thing which I should like to clear up. That is the item which compels every Congressman with an income of Rs. 100 and over to contribute 5 per cent to the Congress Fund for propaganda. I have not anticipated that this provision should be there for all time. What I have anticipated and what I want to make clear is, that this really is a programme for one year. It will put the Congress workers and the nation to the test as to what they may be capable of doing. If the nation can honestly work that programme out then the fear that Dr. Besant has about non-violent non-cooperation and civil disobedience will be found to be totally dispelled. There would be no occasion for any such drastic step or direct action, supposing there is an atmosphere of sterling discipline and organisation. Dr. Besant will say: "Yes" even as she had no fear of civil disobedience or suspension of payment of taxes in Bardoli, because the people there had had a felt grievance, and therefore they could act as one man. But here the people have nothing like a felt grievance. They have not got the longing or yearning for Swaraj. If they had, we would not find the gross, I was going to say, the very gross irregularities that have now been reported to the Subjects Committee to-night in the registration of delegates. I am however glad really that these irregularities have been reported.

I am hoping that the Committee appointed will discharge its duty properly and investigate every point. I know how simple and easy it is to detect these irregularities, because the register is there and, if any Congress Committee wants to cover an irregularity by its rules, those rules have to be produced.

There is a clause in the Congress constitution that all rules made by a Provincial Committee ought to be submitted to the A. I. C. C. and be subject to its vote. I know that procedure has not been followed since the inauguration of the constitution except in stray instances. I know in what a lax manner the provisions in the constitution in this matter have been complied with. It is a tale of woe which I need not worry you with at the present moment.

The percentage of income in my resolution is really the acid test of the sincerity of congressmen. If they are really sincere about this programme, and if they are sincere about getting the Nehru Scheme accepted by the British Parliament or on failure of acceptance they are going to work out independence, they must be prepared to pay five per cent of income. Independence does not come simply by shouting on the house top, but by working for it. We cannot get independence, if we are chary of giving five per mensem. I have deliberately excluded Rs. 100 and less, because there is no use compelling those who cannot afford to pay. The others if they want to honestly work out the programme will pay. If the proper atmosphere is not created, this contribution will not be forthcoming except from solitary Congressmen. I know there is that danger. Unless we incorporate some provisions in order to work Congress machinery effectively, we are not going to make any headway altogether.

In spite of knowing all these dangers, I take my courage in my hands, and say "No." As you all know, I am irrepressible optimist. It is really for you to accept this resolution. You may remove this or any other clause. I am not particular about it at all, seeing the atmosphere around me during the past eighteen hours. But I do not withdraw the resolution. It is for you to accept it if you mean to carry it out, both in spirit and letter.

#### MR. JOGLEKAR'S AMENDMENT

Mr. Joglekar stood up to move an amendment.

Mr. Doyalji doubted if Mr. Joglekar had Khaddar dress on, and demanded expert examination.

Mr. Joglekar explained: According to my knowledge I am clad in khaddar; but I am not a weaving or cloth expert.

Pandit Motilal to Mr. Joglekar: Do you believe it to be handspun and hand woven khaddar?

Mr. Joglekar: Yes, I do.

Mr. Joglekar's amendment was intended to tone up the resolution, but it was lost.

*Mr. Gandhi's resolution was then put and carried by a large majority while Mr. Satyamurthi's was lost.*

### Pandit Motilal's Statement

Before adjourning the proceedings Pandit Motilal made a statement in reference to the statement published over the signature of Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose relating to the proceedings held yesterday. He said:—

"I should have preferred to make my statement in the presence of Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose, but I find not only he, but as far as I can see, no member of the Subjects Committee from Bengal is present at this meeting. It therefore becomes necessary to make my statement, so that it may not be taken that I accept his statement as published. That statement covers two points. The first is a charge personally against me, as Chairman of this meeting, that I gagged him. The second is about the merits of the resolution of Gandhiji's and some other matters connected therewith. So far as the merits of the resolution are concerned, that resolution has been adopted by you, and it will be before the Congress to-morrow. Whatever may be said for and against it, it will be before the Congress and I, as Chairman of the Subjects Committee, have nothing to do with it. It may be that I also favour that resolution. But I have nothing to do with the discussion that will follow or whether it is accepted or not.

"As regards the charge that I gagged him, I specially want to lay stress on the fact that you all remember that, when closure was adopted on Gandhiji's resolution, Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose asked my permission to make personal statement. I allowed him to do so. Indeed, I readily granted him permission. In the course of his statement, he began to deal with the merits of the resolution and criticise the resolution. I would have allowed him to go on if I was left to myself; but three members from different sides of the House objected, and asked if it was permissible after the closure motion by a speech as Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose was doing. Being called upon to give a ruling on the point, I gave a ruling as I conceived it to be correct.

"It may be if no objection is taken a President generally allows the greatest latitude to the speakers. But in this case there were members objecting from three corners, and there was no alternative on my part, but to call Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose to order. I simply said to Mr. Bose: 'You must confine your remarks to the personal statement you are going to make.'

"Now, gentlemen, do you think that was gagging? (cries of "no, no.") (A voice: "Yes, it was gagging.") If Mr. Subhas Bose had said anything in continuation of the personal statement, he would have been perfectly within his rights. I make this statement because it is necessary at the commencement of the open Congress session, that there should be no misunderstanding.

"Discussion on the resolution will begin to-morrow. I do not want that the delegates assembled in the Congress should proceed to business with preconceived prejudice against their President, that he is a person who is in the habit of gagging."

Mr. Shivaprasad GUPTA asked that when the five percent levy would come into force, on what income the levy would be made and whether it would be on the previous year's income as in the case of income-tax or on the current year's income. If it was to come into force immediately, then he wanted to give notice of his resignation from the Congress, because he honestly could not pay five per cent on his income.

Pandit Motilal said that the details would be decided by the Working Committee.

## MR. S. SRINIVASA IYENGAR'S STATEMENT

Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar took this opportunity of making a statement. He said :  
 "There has been some misunderstanding as if the compromise that I entered into yesterday, was done without consultation of leading friends both in Bengal and other camps. Let me assure you that there need be no misgiving in this matter. I have consulted such of those as I could get at. Before I agreed to compromise I consulted Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose, Mr. Sarat Bose, Mr. Kiran Sankar Rai and others. I am not going to tell you the result of their view, but undoubtedly consultations there were, and the general impression enabled me to decide it in the way in which I decided it. I take the fullest responsibility of it. (Hear, hear). Let there be no misunderstanding. I repeat that I did consult the leading members of the group to which I have the honour to belong"

## FIFTH DAY—30 DECEMBER 1928.

The Subjects Committee which was advertised to meet at 7 p. m. on this day did not assemble till one hour later.

Dr. Annie Besant was the only prominent person seated on the dais at the appointed time. The delay was due to negotiations that were still proceeding among the leaders outside on M. Gandhi's resolution adopted by the Subjects Committee and which was sought to be revised in order to remove any vestige of suggestion that it was an indirect representation to the Simon Commission. Lobbies were buzzing with remarks relative to the attitude and strength of the different sections of Congressmen. It was however clear that the Bengal delegates were determined on at least recording their opinion for independence. This was announced by circulation of an amendment by Mr. Subash Chander Bose dissociating himself and his supporters from the Dominion Status form of constitution. At the same time it was learnt that he might not openly divide the house.

Pandit Motilal Nehru announced in so many words that re-opening of Gandhiji's resolution would only be done the next day. This announcement also meant that the session will be prolonged by one day. At the same time it gave more time to the Congress Leaders to come to a settlement on the main resolution. Gandhiji, said Motilal, had altered his silence hours, so as to suit his participation in the discussion the next day.

The other resolutions on the agenda which had got clogged, together with the amendments were taken in.

## 4. Relations with Foreign Nations.

On the motion of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the meeting authorised the All-India Congress Committee to develop contact with other countries and peoples who also suffered under Imperialism and open a foreign department in this behalf. Pandit Jawaharlal mentioned in support of the resolution several telegrams of greetings received and read out in the open Congress.

On the same grounds Mr. Saryamurti appealed to the committee to support his resolution (complementary to the previous one) for the establishment of agencies to promote trade, cultural and political relations between India and foreign countries, especially at Kabul, Nanking, Teheran, Moscow, Tokyo, New York, Washington, Berlin, Paris and London.

It was however opposed by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who, speaking from his own experience described it as an unpractical proposition. It was useless to start these agencies without having our own men there, and that would mean heavy expense of money which was more urgently required for programme within the country.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru explained the difficulties of carrying out the resolution. Mr. Satyamurti withdrew it remarking : "What else can I do."

## 5. War danger.

The recommendations of the U. P. Provincial Congress Committee reiterating the Madras Congress resolution regarding War danger and refusing to be exploited by England in her imperialistic aims, was moved by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and carried.

An amendment by Mr. Nimbkar proposing complete non-co-operation with the Government to paralyse the military machine was not pressed.

Doctor Besant speaking on this resolution sympathised with Mr. Satyamurti's previous resolution for cultural and commercial contact with other countries. Her only reason for not supporting the resolution openly was that she could not be in the Congress to-morrow.

A voice : Why would you not be in the Congress.

Mrs. Besant : I shall give my reasons when I think it right.

#### 6. Pan-Asiatic Federation.

Mr. Satyamurti's resolution directing the Working Committee to correspond with the leaders and representatives of other Asiatic nations and to take other steps to summon the next session of the Pan-Asiatic Federation in 1930 in India was carried amidst applause after an observation from the Chair to the effect that the proposition put in the resolution was impracticable and he wanted to guard the Congress from passing any resolutions, on which no action could be taken.

#### 7. The Chinese Struggle.

Mr. Tayabullah moved a resolution conveying the warmest greetings and heartiest congratulations to China on having attained full and complete freedom and nationhood and having ended the era of foreign domination.

Pandit Jawaharlal opposing said that there was really no freedom for the people in China. The fact of the matter was that a few military governors had shot down thousands of people with the help of money received from various imperialist powers and with the help of these imperialist powers they were in power in China now. The present Government was indeed hobnobbing with British officials which in itself was a suspicious factor. As Madam Sun Yat Sen had put it, in her message to-day, there were forces of counter-revolution at work, and she herself was practically in exile.

Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya said that such shootings and disturbances as were mentioned by Pandit Jawaharlal, were inevitable in every revolution. Their message of congratulation was really to express their appreciation of the fact that China had at last been able to establish a centralised Government without allowing the provinces to be subject to centrifugal forces.

Mr. Sukumar Chatterjee, who had returned from China in 1924, said that all British industrialists and bankers in China were being backed by Japan, and were doing underhand work against Chinese Nationalists. The latest news he had received by post about two months ago, but he was not prepared to vouch for its correctness. The envelope in which it was received was opened, as indeed was all his foreign correspondence. According to this message, the situation was that the party in power were forging military discipline, and had actually to shoot down some people, but were not siding with the British and had cut off all connection with the British.

Another delegate who claimed to have returned from China more recently than the previous speaker, questioned the correctness of the picture drawn by that speaker.

Mr. Satyamurti said that the contradiction and assertions did not change the fundamental fact that China was free from foreign domination, and especially British Imperialism. "We, as a nation, may have internal quarrels, but the moment the Union Jack is removed, other countries will congratulate us."

The resolution was carried amidst applause.

#### 8. Stiffening of Simon Boycott.

The question of organising boycott of the Simon Commission during its next visit to Madras, came in for consideration on the motion of Mr. Bulusu Sambamurti and the conduct of the Boycott Committee and the leaders thereof was made the subject of adverse comments. The motion was to add the following clause to the resolution moved by Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru at the instance of the U. P. Congress Committee :—

"This Congress appeals to the people to make the boycott complete and effective in the provinces which the Simon Commission may visit hereafter by

organising, amongst other things, hartals and demonstrations, and calls upon them to disobey all orders of the Government prohibiting such activities."

Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru's resolution was in these terms :—

"This Congress congratulates the people of the country on the success of the boycott of the Statutory Commission, and, in particular, the people of Lahore and Lucknow who despite the savage and brutal attacks of the police, maintained discipline and peacefully continued their boycott demonstrations and thus triumphed over official lawlessness and brutality.

"The Congress has noted however that some people have deliberately violated the nation's resolve to boycott the Commission, and have in defiance of the nation's will, co-operated with the Simon Commission and taken a leading part in welcoming it. In view of this un-national conduct of some people and in view of the part taken by some officials, British and Indian, in the brutal assaults by the police on national workers, this Congress advises the people to refrain as far as possible from having any social dealings with any such person who assaults national workers or who takes a leading part in co-operating with the Commission.

"In particular, the Congress advises that such persons should not be invited to social functions and no function given by them or in their honour should be attended."

In moving his amendment, Mr. Sambamurti said that it was necessary that this new clause must be there, especially after their experience of what happened in Madras during the visit of the Simon Commission to that city on the last occasion. The two Provincial Congress Committees, Tamil and Andhra, differed with regard to the action to be taken when prohibitory orders were passed not only on 25 selected members but on the people of the whole city against addressing meetings, circulating pamphlets and doing anything to organise demonstrations. While the Tamil Nadu Committee was against civil disobedience, the Andhra Committee was willing to disobey and a situation was created in consequence of which the Working Committee had to be approached and they had to give the direction that prohibitory orders need not be disobeyed, which direction created a very grave situation in Madras and lowered the prestige of the Congress in Madras. "I want the House to give a specified lead in the matter, and say that prohibitory orders if issued should be disobeyed. Already the Government of Madras contemplated upon issuing prohibitory orders next time also, and it is well that this clause is passed, so that we may on our return to Madras organise effective and complete boycott."

Swami Govindanand seconded the amendment.

Mr. Jawaharlal pointed out that this House should not force any decision on the provinces, and these should be left to decide for themselves, because they were the best judges of the local conditions. He expressed his assent to the first part of the amendment.

Dr. Pattabi Sitaramayya regretted that Mr. Jawaharlal had not appreciated Mr. Sambamurti's point. Madras was not homogeneous. It had two languages, and was under the jurisdiction of the Tamil Nadu and Andhra Committees. Mr. Sambamurti had already described the conflict of opinion which had arisen last February between these two committees. When the matter was referred to the Working Committee, the cryptic answer came "Don't disobey." Were they going to repeat history during the next February? Either they or the Working Committee must face the music.

There was an interruption, and Mr. Sambamurti said that the Congress must give a clear lead because this matter is of national importance.

Mr. Hameed Khan stated that the fault of not disobeying was not with the Tamil Committee. It was the Working Committee's decision that stood in their way. If Andhra was more anxious to disobey than Tamil, nobody prevented them from doing so.

Mr. Govindachari wanted Mr. Hameed Khan to picture to himself what had happened in Mr. Satyamurthi's house. He would remind him that while Andhra was unanimous for disobeying, Tamil Nadu was unanimous the other way.

A conflict then arose and the Working Committee had to be addressed. A lead therefore was necessary from the Congress.

Mr. Harisarvottama Rao pressed for the acceptance of the amendment on the ground that hartals and demonstrations were serious items of work. When, on behalf of the Congress, they once declared a hartal, they must go forward with it, take the shot if given and not merely keep indoors at the dictation of the Police Commissioner. Leaders must be prepared to take risks.

Mr. S. Satyamurti characterised the speech of the previous speaker as a veiled attack on him, though Mr. Rao had not the courage to mention names. The question of disobedience of prohibitory orders came up for discussion not only because these were served on individuals, but on the whole population. As a matter of fact, several friends, including the speaker, signed a proclamation and proposed to issue it when Mr. Sami Venkatachalam Chetti, the titular leader of the Congress Party in the Madras Council and an Andhra member of the A. I. C. C., came to his house and begged of him not to issue the manifesto, stating that he was not prepared to go to jail and that his trade would be affected. Other members of the Boycott Committee also came, Dr. Varadarajulu Naidu, Mr. R. Chinnaswami and Mr. C. N. Muthuranga Mudaliar.

There were interruptions and the President asked the speaker not to refer to personalities.

Mr. Satyamurti proceeding said that he was prepared to disobey the prohibitory order and there was no doubt about it, if the Congress passed the resolution, he would loyally and faithfully carry it out if he was in Madras at the time. (Laughter.) He was not responsible for the fiasco, and it was correct that he kept himself indoors. As to instructions from the Police Commissioner, it was an unfounded charge. He led the procession from Mount Road to the Beach under a shower of stones, and his life was in danger for the next fifteen days. If they passed the amendment they would find he would be foremost in obeying it.

Mr. Basheer Ahmed said that it would be difficult to conduct a peaceful hartal in Madras, as there were two parties. It was not wise that a general direction should be given to disobey orders. Disobedience depended on the circumstances which prevailed at the time. The province concerned must be left to itself to decide in such matters.

#### AMENDMENT CARRIED.

The amendment was put to vote and carried 35 against, Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar, Mr. Satyamurti and a few other Tamil members remaining neutral, while many Andhra members voted for it.

A second count was taken with the result that 44 voted for and 43 against, Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar was neutral this time also, while Mr. Satyamurti and the rest of the Tamil group, excepting Mr. S. Ganesan, voted against it.

#### 9. MODERNISATION OF AFGHANISTAN.

Mr. Basheer Ahmed (Madras) made an unsuccessful attempt to record a resolution of congratulation to the King of Afghanistan on his attempts to modernise Afghanistan. One of the opposition speakers was Mr. Sri Prakasha who said that King Amanullah did not deserve the congratulations of India, if he shot down people to compel them to wear hats and shave off their beards.

#### 10. INDEPENDENCE IDEAL

Mr. Satyamurti wanted by a resolution to reiterate the Madras Congress resolution that the immediate goal of the people is complete national Independence, and that there can be no true freedom until the British connection is severed.

Pandit Motilal pointed out that it was blocked by the amendment of Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose on the agenda.

#### 11. BOYCOTT OF FOREIGN CLOTH

The recommendation of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee for propaganda for boycott of all foreign cloth and British goods was carried.

## 12. PROTEST AGAINST PUBLIC SAFETY BILL

Mr. Nimbkar met with warm support for his resolution protesting against the Public Safety Bill and the Trades Disputes Bill as a reactionary attempt to restrict the growth of organised labour movement and as an unjustifiable infringement upon the people.

## 13. NABHA RULER'S DEPORTATION

A resolution by Sirdar Sardul Singh, opining that the internment of the Maharaja of Nabha under Regulation 1818 was unjust, unconstitutional and vindictive, was passed after two or three delegates expressing uncomplimentary remarks against Indian Princes as a whole. A gentleman from Kerala remarked that if there was anything for which they should be grateful to the British Government, it was in respect of their attitude to Indian Princes.

Mr. Sri Prakash said that if he had the power he would confiscate the properties of all these rulers.

Mr. Syamsunder Chakrabarti said after a perusal of the literature regarding the persecution of the Maharaja, that he was an example for other princes to follow in the matter of independent views, for which he suffered.

The resolution was carried after certain modifications.

## 14. DEATH OF BENGALI PRISONERS IN JAIL

Mr. Sen Gupta's resolution expressing sympathy with the families of five Bengalees who died recently in prison was carried. The resolution stated that they died purely as the result of incarceration.

## ORIYA DELEGATES' WALK-OUT

Mr. Biswanath Das then made a statement on behalf of the Oriya-speaking people. He said that formation of Oriya as a separate province was dear to them, and had been recognised since 1924 by the Congress. In order to embody this demand of theirs in the All-Parties' Conference draft constitution, Pandit Nilkantha Das was deputed to make a representation on this behalf at the Lucknow All-Parties' Conference, but the finding of the All-Parties' Conference, so far as Oriya was concerned, was not satisfactory. Mr. Patnaik therefore had given notice of an amendment to the resolution of Gandhiji which was withdrawn on a specific assurance by Pandit Motilal that he would be given permission to move this question as a separate resolution. Now as that permission had not been given, he wished to record a protest. Immediately, Mr. Biswanath Das, accompanied by half-a-dozen Oriyas withdrew from the meeting.

Mr. Nilkantha Das wanted to make a statement, when Pandit Motilal Nehru remarked: "No permission after threat." Pandit Nilkantha Das also withdrew.

## 15. ANTI-IMPERIALISM CONFERENCE

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's resolution for sending a representative to represent the Congress at the Second World Congress of the League against Imperialism was carried.

## 16. THE BARDOLI STRUGGLE

Mr. Vallabhai Patel was congratulated on the success of the Bardoli campaign.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru objected to the title of Sardar being conferred and similar titles being created and lavished upon people.

Swami Kumaranand regarded that the Bardoli campaign was a failure rather than a success.

## 17. BOYCOTT OF GOVT. FUNCTIONS

Finally, the Subjects Committee adopted the motion of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru made on behalf of the U. P. Congress Committee opining that it is contrary to the spirit of the National struggle for freedom for Congressmen to participate in functions meant to consolidate foreign rule and do honour to alien rulers and their officials. It therefore instructs the people in general and Congressmen in particular to abstain from attending Government levees, durbars and all other official and semi-official functions held by the Government officials or in their honour.

This disposed of the Subjects Committee's work so far as resolutions in the agenda were concerned after which it adjourned.

## SIXTH DAY—1st JANUARY 1929.

The Congress Subjects Committee met on this day at 1-30 p.m., Pandit Motilal Nehru presiding. The delay of an hour was due to the fact that the members were delayed at the All Parties Convention which concluded its deliberation at 1-15 p.m.

The Congress was invited next year to Bombay, Poona and Lahore and by a majority of votes it was decided to hold the Congress next year at Lahore.

## REDUCTION OF DELEGATES

There were four proposals for the reduction of the number of delegates to 500, 1000, 1500 and 3000 from 6000, the present number. All motions were lost.

Pt. Jawaharlal who moved for 1500 said that if they wanted to convert the Congress into a deliberative and business like body they could not but reduce the number. A special sub-committee had also strongly recommended reduction. He referred to the corruption prevailing in the election of delegates.

Mr. Satyamurthi opposing any curtailment said: "This was a Mussolini idea. Delegates were messengers of the Congress and met once a year to deliberate." He suggested strict rules and better supervision etc.

Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar said: "6000 was too great and 1000 too small a number." He proposed 3000 but in view of the opposition did not press the matter.

At this stage the President making a statement said that he was glad to say that the friends of Utkal had come back yesterday. Misunderstandings were likely to occur in the vast gathering and the task of the President was difficult. He hoped that the friends of Utkal would forget the incident.

Mr. Nilkantha Das appreciated the Pandit's explanation and said that they were bound by the mandate to place before them the Oriya point of view and hoped that their grievances would receive due consideration.

## DELEGATION FEE INCREASED

The House then accepted the motion of the U. P. P. C. C. for increasing the delegates' fee from Re. 1 to 5. Pandit Jawaharlal on behalf of the U. P. P. C. C. moved that the surplus in the hands of the Reception Committee after the Congress session be divided annually between the All-India Congress Committee and the Congress Committee of the province in which the Congress was held and half of the amount going to the All-India Congress Committee should be added to the permanent fund of the Congress.

Sj. Subhas Chandra Bose appealing to Pt. Jawaharlal said that they wanted the money to remain in the provinces where important Congress work would have to be done.

Pt. Jawaharlal said that when they wanted to send ambassadors and national delegations to foreign countries and establish a central research association they must have funds. He was prepared, however, to exclude Bengal. Thus, the amended motion was carried.

## IRREGULARITIES IN THE ELECTION OF DELEGATES

The Subjects Committee next adopted the resolution for the deletion of the clause in the constitution which stood in the way of the Congress interfering in matters of Indian States.

The Committee also adopted a motion proposed by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru that no changes should be made in the list of delegates within seven days of the Congress in any circumstances. The motion arose from comments made by Mahatma Gandhi on irregularities connected with the election of delegates and the report of the Sub-Committee which examined the reported irregularities.

## PERMANENT CONGRESS

Mr. Srinivass Iyengar here took the chair. Discussion then took place on the motion that a permanent Congress Office should be located in Allahabad.

Mr. Satyamurthi moved an amendment that Calcutta should be the seat of a permanent Congress Office. On appeal by Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar the motion relating



to the location of a permanent Congress Office was treated as withdrawn and it was agreed that the Congress Office in the coming year should be at Allahabad.

Mr. Jairamdas Daulatram moved for change in the constitution making it necessary for delegates to have residential qualifications.

Swami Govindanand moved an amendment for debarring provinces which dare not pay after the holding of the Congress session.

Pandit Jawaharlal also pressed certain changes in the constitution in regard to the submission of the list of delegates to the Congress Secretary by the provinces.

Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar appealed to the movers of all amendments to withdraw their notices as it was desirable that the changes should be made in the constitution only after they had been fully examined. He suggested that those proposals should be examined by the Working Committee and brought up before the next session of the Congress giving the country a full opportunity to consider implications of the proposed changes. The suggestion was agreed to.

#### DETENTION POLICY CONDEMNED.

The committee next agreed to the resolutions condemning continued detention of some of the patriots in the Punjab, Bengal etc., without trial, detention of martial law prisoners and also condemning numerous arrests, reported tortures of prisoners etc., in the Punjab in connection with the Saunders murder.

Mr. Nimbkar proposed that a resolution should be passed condemning the shooting of labourers at Lillooah, Bombay, Madras etc. As notice had not been given of the resolution Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar suggested that the motion be brought before the All-India Congress Committee.

Mr. Satyamurthi next moved the resolution urging the Indian Princes to establish full responsible Government in their States if they desired to participate in the Indian Commonwealth.

Mr. Monilal Kothari moved an amendment which while similar in intention enumerated the need for the acceptance by the Princes of the freedom of the press, freedom of speech and representation through legislatures.

Mr. Kothari's amendment was pressed to a division and carried by 30 to 27 votes.

Mr. G. S. Gupta, Swarajist Leader in the Central Provinces Council, moved for the deletion of the clause of the Madras Congress resolution on the boycott of the Simon Commission restricting the attendance of the unofficial members of the legislature.

Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar said that the resolution was redundant as the Working Committee and the All-India Congress Committee had already suspended that part of the Madras resolution.

Other resolutions pending before the Congress were referred to the All-India Congress Committee by a majority of votes, Pandit Jawaharlal protesting against that procedure.

The Subjects-Committee also agreed to authorise the All-India Congress Committee to elect office-bearers for the next year.

At this stage the Subjects Committee came to a close. The first meeting of the All-India Congress Committee was held on the next morning, the 2nd January 1929, at Deshbandhunagar in the A. I. C. C. pandal, Pandit Motilal presiding.

### The Calcutta A. I. C. C. Meeting.

Among those present were Mahatma Gandhi, Pt. Motilal Nehru, S. J. Jamnalal Bajaj, Dr. Besant, Moulana Abul Kalam Azad, Mr. Satyamurthi, Dewan Mangal Singh, Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar, Dr. B. C. Roy, Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar, Mr. Vijayraghavacharia, S. J. M. Sen-Gupta, Dr. Ansari, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Messrs. Jamnadas Mehta, Jairamdas Daulatram, Ballabhbai Patel and S. Rajendra Prasad.

The first item on the agenda was the consideration of the subscription to the A. I. C. C. as is provided in the Article IX of the Congress constitution. It was amended in the open Congress and in accordance with the amendment, Pt. Jawaharlal put forward a definite resolution asking the Provincial Congress Committees to pay to

the A. I. C. C. 10 per cent. of their collections with the minimum of rupees one hundred. Discussion then followed on the matter and S. J. Satyamurthi suggested the word "subscription" instead of "collection".

S. J. Kiran Sankar Ray suggested that the All-India leaders should also collect some money and with regard to the subscription, he thought that the amount of subscription should be fixed, major provinces paying more.

The House then accepted the suggestion of Mahatma Gandhi that the question should be left to the honour of the provinces and proposed that the Provincial Congress Committees should decide the amount and pay it before the end of February.

A panel for deciding the election dispute was then nominated and the last year's list was accepted with only one change.

#### ELECTION OF WORKING COMMITTEE.

Mr. Srinivasa Iyenger proposed the following : (General Secretaries) Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Dr. Ansari ; (Treasurers) Seth Jamnalal Bajaj and Mr. Siva Prasad Gupta ; (Members) Mahatma Gandhi, Moulana Abul Kalam Azad, Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose, Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Mr. Rajendra Prasad, Mr. Bulusu Sambamurti, Mrs. Sarojini Devi, Sardar Sardul Singh and Mr. Sen Gupta.

The mention of Dr. Ansari's name as Secretary evoked enthusiastic cheering. Mr. Hameed Khan (Madras) doubted if it would not be considered *infra dig* for Dr. Ansari to accept the Secretaryship after having served the office of President only last year.

Dr. Ansari was heard to say "nothing of the kind" and Mr. Srinivasa Iyenger reminded the House of the precedent of Pandit Motilal accepting the Secretaryship after the Amritsar Congress. The position of the General Secretary was no less important than that of the President of the Congress.

Mr. Basheer Ahmed suggested the name of Maulana Mohamed Ali who combined in himself the role of a leader and one representing the opinion of his community as a whole. Mr. Basheer Ahmed did not however press his suggestion.

Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar said that his list must be viewed as a block list and was the result of consultations with as many members as possible. It commanded the largest support and was in the nature of a coalition representing all schools of thought in the Congress and gave effect to the view that the Independence School should have sufficient representation.

Dr. Bidhan Roy : How many schools do you recognise ?

Mr. Iyengar : A committee of five office-bearers and ten members cannot represent all schools. What has been the custom is to give representation to different groups as far as possible. Pandit Jawaharlal, Mr. Subhas Bose, Mr. Sambamurti and myself represent the Independence School.

A voice : What about your resignation ?

Mr. Iyengar : My resignation has been withdrawn at the unanimous request of the League.

Continuing, Mr. Iyengar appealed for the unanimous acceptance of the list which he said had received the assent of both Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Motilal Nehru and it was very important that representatives of both schools should be there to work out the programme proposed by Mahatmaji as a compromise and passed by the Congress almost unanimously.

The President commended the names *en bloc* for the approval of the House and said that it was very important that in the selection of names from hostile camps all possible friction must be avoided.

A member : It is there already.

The President : No.

Another member : That is the beauty of the programme Mahatmaji has put forward.

The proposition was put to the vote and carried. Pt. Jawaharlal then moved for the acceptance of the audited accounts which were adopted after which the Committee adjourned 'Sine die.'

# The Indian Statutory Commission

By far the most exciting event of the year 1928 was the announcement made on the 8th November 1927 of the composition of the Statutory Commission under the Reforms Act. Up to the date of the announcement proposals and suggestions had been based largely on the assumption that the Commission would be of mixed composition. The departure from tradition and practice in this respect took the country by surprise, and was met with unyielding opposition from all sides. (See Register 1927 Vol. II).

A widespread call for boycott went round. Politicians of all classes rushed headlong into one camp, and before many days had passed, almost every responsible leader and many public bodies had committed themselves to an adamant opposition to the Commission and a complete boycott of all its proceedings.

It will be remembered that among the resolutions passed at the session of the All India National Congress in Madras in December 1927 was one urging a nation-wide hartal, that is, the closing of shops and general abstention from business, on the day when the Commission landed. A large number of other organisations, such as the National Federation, the Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasabha, also passed resolutions to the same effect. The Legislative Assembly and some Provincial Councils also joined in the boycott and refused to co-operate with the Commission, though subsequently all of them, excepting the C. P. Council, declared for co-operation largely with the help of official and nominated members. The elected members of the Councils, however, almost solidly stood for boycott. The only parties and organisations in India which offered to co-operate did so because they sought some sectional gain by betraying the national cause. There was a minority of Moslems who were thinking of communal rather than national interests; a section of denationalised Christians who thought that Christianity and British Civilisation were synonymous; an unrepresentative group from the depressed classes, among some of whom, unfortunately, subjection to Brahmin India had bred servility to the British India.

On the 15th January 1928 the Working Committee of the Congress, in co-operation with other organisations, held a All-Party Conference at Benares which declared a hartal for February 3rd, the day the Commission was to land in Bombay. The following is the authentic version of the proceedings of the conference : —

## The All Parties Boycott Conference

"At the invitation of Dr. Ansari, Chairman of the All-India Congress Committee a conference of the representatives of the various political parties was held in Benares on Jan. 15th at 2 p. m. Among those present were Dr. Ansari, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta, Messrs. Sachidananda Sinha, C. Y. Chintamani, Bepin Chandra Pal, Pandit Iqbal Narain Gurtu and Prof. P. K. Telang of the Home Rule League, Dr. Moonjee, Mr. J. N. Basu of the Liberal Federation, Calcutta, Mr. Kiran Sankar Roy, Secretary, Bengal Provincial Congress Committee, Mr. Sampurnanand, Secretary, U. P. Provincial Congress Committee, Mr. Krisnaram Mehta, editor of 'The Leader,' Maulvi Masud Ali Nadvi, Babu Gaurishankar Prasad of the National Liberal Federation, Chaudhuri Behari Lal representing the depressed classes, Shauaib Qureshi, Mr. Bhargava and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

"The conference discussed the boycott of the Simon Commission and the various methods for giving effect to it.

"It passed the following resolutions unanimously :—

"This conference representing various political parties is unanimously of opinion that the Statutory Commission must be left severely alone by the people.

"(1) In pursuance of this resolution, a hartal should be observed all over India on

the day the Statutory Commission lands at Bombay, the hartal to be observed from morning till the time of the meeting referred to in clause 2.

"(2) Public meetings should be held all over India on February 3rd at 4-30 p. m. At those meetings the following resolution should be placed for adoption :—"This meeting of the citizens of (here name of the place should be mentioned) places on record its condemnation of the appointment of the Statutory Commission, in utter disregard of Indian opinion, and its firm resolve to have nothing to do with that Commission in any form and any stage of its work ; it calls upon all the elected members of the Council of State, the Assembly and the Provincial Councils and in particular the representative of this (town, province, etc.) to do everything that lies in their power to oppose and prevent the formation of a committee of the legislature in connection with the said Commission ; this meeting places on record its opinion that the constitution of India should be framed by Indians and strongly supports the proposal for a special convention to frame such a constitution."

On the 3rd February 1928 the members of the Statutory Commission landed at Bombay. Here, as well as elsewhere, perfect and peaceful hartal was observed and monster meetings were held. As a demonstration of the united nation-wide desire to boycott the Commission and repudiate the autocratic assumption behind it, the hartals were, in spite of the unfortunate events in Madras and the one or two sporadic incidents elsewhere, a complete success. In Madras a large crowd mobbed tram cars and private persons and gathered in great numbers outside the High Court where they quickly got out of control necessitating the police to open fire injuring a number of men of whom two afterwards died. In Calcutta most of the trouble was caused by rowdies and goondas who tried to prevent motor buses and tram cars from plying. The students of the Presidency College, it was alleged, assaulted their Principal and came into conflict with the Police who assaulted and injured a number of students and passersby.

Barring the above two regrettable happenings the hartal was a huge success in other places. The Indian business community, with very rare exceptions, suspended work with striking unanimity—petty shopkeepers as zealously as the biggest firms— notwithstanding the considerably greater hardship the hartal imposed upon them. The accounts received from all quarters showed that the principal towns wore the aspect of cities of the dead, so thorough was the cessation of all locomotion or other normal activity. The general public was so fully resolved to make the boycott a success that the efforts in some places of non-indigenous agencies controlling the means of communication to create a semblance of activity proved futile. Everywhere the members of the Commission went they encountered receptions with Black flags and shouts of "Simon, go back."

From Bombay the Commissioners came straight to Delhi where they arrived on the 4th February. Two days after, i.e. on the 6th February, Sir John Simon, as Chairman of the Commission, issued a statement in the form of a letter to the Viceroy delineating the procedure to be adopted by the Commission. The following is the full text of the letter:—

#### Simon's letter to Viceroy

"Your Excellency,—In your speech to the Central Legislature on Thursday you laid renewed emphasis on the full discretion as to methods which has, from the beginning, been left in the hands of the Indian Statutory Commission ; and I myself as Chairman on landing in India next day, authorised the issue of a statement on behalf of the Commission that it hoped without delay to announce the line of procedure which it would propose to follow. Evidence accumulates that throughout India there is much uncertainty as to the manner in which we may be expected to exercise our functions, and even considerable misunderstanding as to what we conceive those functions to be. While we receive many messages of welcome and encouragement, we note that speeches are being made and resolutions passed which are based on a complete, though doubtless genuine, misconception of our intentions. It is my plain duty therefore as Chairman to set out forthwith the true position as we regard it ; and since on the preliminary visit there is not likely to be any formal

sitting of the Commission when a statement could be made, I venture to address this letter to Your Excellency.

#### SUGGESTION FOR JOINT CONFERENCE

"We understand that the Government of India and the Local Governments have been engaged for some time past in preparing the material which they might put before the Commission. We have not seen these documents, and do not know how far they may consist of matters of fact, and how far of matters of opinion or whether they deal with past events or with suggestions for the future. But whatever they are, instead of dealing with them by ourselves, we wish to propose that they and the evidence given in explanation or amplification of them should come before a joint free conference over which I should preside, consisting of the seven British Commissioners and a corresponding body of representatives chosen by the Indian Legislatures just as we ourselves have been chosen by the British Parliament. We put forward the plan of a joint free conference not only because we should welcome the assistance of colleagues from the Indian Legislatures, but because we think it is only right and fair, and in the truest interests of India and Britain alike, that opportunity should be provided for such memoranda and testimony to be scrutinised, and if necessary, elucidated from the Indian side on free and equal terms. We suggest therefore that the two Houses of the Central Legislature should in due course be invited to choose from their non-official members a joint committee which might conveniently be seven in number, and that each local legislative council should be asked to constitute a similar body. The Indian side of the conference would consist, when central subjects are being dealt with, of those first named. In a province, the Indian wing would primarily consist of the provincial members, but in order that the Central Joint Committee may not have a partial view of the material put before it, we should be glad if arrangements could be arrived at which would enable its members or some of them to be present as an additional element at the provincial sittings.

"We have no wish to dictate the composition of the Indian wing to the conference in more detail, and we should greatly prefer that the precise scheme should be reached by agreement between the different elements in India concerned. Our main object will be met so long as the arrangement is one which secures that the Indian side of the Joint Conference includes on appropriate occasions those who are able to speak for the provincial councils. Just as the joint committee would speak for the Central Legislature, and so long as the members representing India sitting with us do not amount to an unwieldy number. We assume of course that just as we ourselves are a body selected from all the British parties and both the Houses of parliament, so our Indian counterpart would be so far as may be truly representative.

"Two matters remain to be dealt with—the question of evidence other than that above referred to and the question of report. I wish to deal candidly and clearly with both.

"Some of us have had considerable experience of the method of joint conferences as applied both to industrial and political questions ; and it is quite clear to us that each side of the conference will require from time to time to meet by itself. We see no reason however why evidence from public and representative bodies and from individuals should not normally be given to the conference as a whole, just as evidence presented by or on behalf of the various Governments would be. If a case arises when this general plan cannot be followed, I should make no secret of it and would ask my colleagues in the joint free conference when, as I hope, they learn to have faith in my sense of fairness, to accept from me such account of the matter as I can give them on behalf of the Commission, with due regard to the reason why the testimony has been separately received. I imagine that the Indian side may find occasions when they would think it well to act in the same way.

#### "A COMPLETELY INDEPENDENT AND UNFETTERED BODY"

"As regards the report, it is, I feel necessary to restate the true function of the Commission and its place in the general scheme which you announced last Novem-

ber. The Commission is in no sense an instrument either of the Government of India or of the British Government, but enters on the duty laid upon it by the King-Emperor as a completely independent and unfettered body composed of members of Parliament who approach the Indian Legislatures as colleagues. It is not an executive or legislating body authorised to pronounce decisions about the future government of India. Before these decisions can be reached, the full process, of which the present investigation is a first step, must be completed including the affording of opportunity for the views of the Indian Legislature, amongst other bodies, of being presented by delegations in London to the Joint Parliamentary committee. The present Commission is only authorised to report and make recommendations; and in this report we desire to include a faithful account of opinions and aspirations prevalent in India, and of the concrete proposals for constitutional reform so far as these are put before us. The British Commissioners therefore are bound to be solely responsible for the statement of the effect upon their own minds of the investigation as a whole. We shall report to the authority by which we have been constituted, just as (if the Conference is set up) the Joint Committee would, we presume, be entitled to report its conclusions to the Central Legislature. It is obvious that those documents should be prepared and presented simultaneously. There are wellknown constitutional means by which the document emanating from the Joint Committee and presented to the Central Legislature can be forwarded to and made available for the British Parliament; but if the Indian Joint Committee would prefer it, we would make its report an annexe to our own document, so that both might be presented to the King-Emperor and made public at the same moment.

"Above all, I would urge that one of the merits of the method of joint conference is that besides securing due recognition of equal status, it provides the opportunity for that free exchange of views and mutual influence which are best calculated to promote the largest measure of agreement that is possible.

"Our present visit is preliminary; and the sitting of the joint free conference, if it is set up, would not begin till October. But we make public our suggestions at once, not only in order to clear the air, but in order to show ourselves available for any conference about any matters of procedure which this statement does not adequately cover. The Commission is of course bound to carry through its task in any event, and discharge to the full the duty cast upon it; but we are undertaking this duty only after having made it known that the method of collaboration on honourable and equal terms is open, and that we put it forward in all sincerity and goodwill. We will only add that in making these proposals we are confident that we are correctly interpreting the intention of the British Parliament.

"The carrying out of our proposals will require at a later date that the Council of State, the Legislative Assembly and the Local Legislative Councils should be moved to elect their representatives who would take part in the Joint Conference, and the Commission will be glad if the Government of India will take such steps as seem appropriate for this purpose in due course."

#### Leaders' Joint Statement.

The above statement of Sir John was subjected to a very careful and indeed anxious consideration for two hours by the leaders of all parties at a conference held in New Delhi on the next day, the 7th February. After a good deal of thoughtful discussion all the party leaders came to an absolutely unanimous and unequivocal decision, repeating their declaration and advice that India should have nothing to do with the Commission at any stage or in any stage or in any form.

The leaders maintained that Sir John Simon's offer did not remove their fundamental objection to the constitution and scheme of the Commission and hence their decision to stick to the boycott policy in spite of Lord Irwin's veiled threats, and Sir John Simon's cajolery.

The trend of the discussion at the Leaders' Conference was unmistakable and there was not one among them who could view the Simon offer with favourable eyes. Mr. Jayakar's signature to the manifesto issued by the

leaders after the Conference, left no room for doubt as to his attitude, whatever might have been the criticisms against him. The inclusion of Raja Ghaznafar Ali Khan of the Punjab was significant inasmuch as it served to prove that the Punjab in spite of Sir Mahomed Safi's activities was for boycott. The unambiguous statement of the all-party leaders gave a clear indication of the country's determination to boycott the unwanted Commission. The following is the text :—

"We have most carefully considered the line of procedure indicated in the statement of Sir John Simon issued to-day. But our objection to the Commission as constituted, and the scheme as announced, are based on principles which remain unaffected by it. In the circumstances, we must adhere to our decision that we cannot have anything to do with the Commission at any stage or in any form."

(Sd.) Dr. Ansari, Mr. Srinivasa Iyenger, Moulana Abul Kalam Azad, Maulana Mahomed Ali.—(Congressmen.) Lala Lajpat Rai, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Mr. N. C. Kelkar.—(Nationalists.) Mr. Jinnah, Sir P. Thakurdas, Moulvi Mahomed Yakub, Raja Ghaznafar Ali Khan.—(Independents.)

There is no need to describe in detail the experience of the Commission in the many different places which they visited. At Delhi in the historic debate on the boycott of the Simon Commission in the Assembly they experienced how the country's verdict was against them. From Delhi they went on to Calcutta, then to Madras and other places in the Madras presidency and North again to Lahore and one or two other places in the Punjab. Practically everywhere they encountered similar reception. After finishing their preliminary visit they left the shores of India on the 31st March 1928.

### The Leaders' Statement

On the 20th February the following statement was issued over the signatures of Pandit Motilal Nehru, Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Mr. M. A. Jinnah, Lala Lajpat Rai and Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas :—

"On the morrow of the momentous decision recorded last night by the Assembly, we desire to issue a statement to our constituencies and the public at large.

"For several months past and in particular since November last repeated warnings were given to the Government here and in England, to the extent to which it is possible now for Indian opinion to find expression in the English press, against the injustice, unwisdom and inexpediency of appointing under the provisions of the Statute of 1919 an exclusively British Parliamentary Commission. These warnings have gone unheeded, both in India and in England. Indeed, an almost distorted version of the Indian situation has been sedulously presented to the British Parliament; and the public and newspapers in England have generally wholly misled or misrepresented the Indian situation. The responsibility of the Government of India, including as it does three Indian members, in thus giving an incorrect perspective of the Indian situation is if anything greater; for we cannot believe that Lords Birkenhead and Winterton could have made the statements which they have made in Parliament and on other platforms, without receiving an estimate of the Indian situation from the Government of India.

"The minatory attitude of Lord Birkenhead, as evidenced by the speech he made in England a report of which arrived during the progress of the debate in the Assembly, and the cablegram of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald to Mr. Vernon Hartshorn, besides showing up His Majesty's Government and the Leader of the Opposition, prove that they had made up their minds to enforce their decision at all costs, without even waiting for the result of the debate in the Assembly, and have succumbed to the anti-Indian propaganda proceeding from well-known sources in India and England.

"We repeat that the responsibility of the Government of India in the matter is great. They have shown by their conduct that they have no touch with the realities of the situation, that they are totally cut off from avenues of correct information, and that they are unable correctly to appreciate or interpret Indian feeling to His Majesty's Government and that they have carried on the entire struggle with the Legislature in the spirit of propagandists, and that they have placed prestige above pru-

dence. We regret to observe, that even the Commission have adopted propagandist methods to create an impression in England and India, that they have received every encouragement in India ; whereas the fact is that barring a section of Mahomedans and a few others, they have been entirely out of touch with and have failed to establish any contact with the people of this country or their representatives in the Assembly.

"The Government and the Commission, instead of being at this juncture a unifying factor, have been counting upon the division of opinion in India. We desire to give a clear warning, that this policy is doomed to failure. Indeed, it has already failed, though we recognised that in a country situated as India is, there are bound to be some people who are likely to yield to the expedencies of the hour.

"Our attention has been drawn to a cablegram sent to *The Times* and other newspapers, asserting or insinuating that methods of undue influence and intimidation were employed in securing Moslem votes in favour of Lala Lajpat Rai's resolution ; and that Hindu officials exercised undue influence on Mahomedan members in their constituencies to vote for it. We unreservedly and emphatically repudiate such charges, and declare that they are simply not true. We treat them as part of the anti-Indian propaganda which has been for months past carried on mischievously, both in an insidious and in an open manner.

"We claim to be in close touch with our people and with our constituencies ; and we unhesitatingly assert that we have correctly and faithfully interpreted the feeling of the vast bulk of our countrymen by recording our votes against the Simon Commission.

"We regret to have to observe that the British Parliament was misled into the decision which it took in November last by those whose duty it was to interpret faithfully Indian feeling ; and the agents of Parliament having committed an egregious blunder in this respect, have counted upon Sir John Simons' tact and ability to come to their rescue. We have been blamed for having rejected Sir John's letter to the Viceroy with undue haste. We discussed it carefully for several hours. It was not difficult for any one of us who had read the debates in the House of Commons to foresee the line which Sir John was likely to take and which he did ultimately take. It was foreshadowed in the Anglo-Indian Press on the arrival of the Commission. In point of fact, some of us had heard from reliable sources in England of the line which he was going to take.

"We have given our utmost consideration to the announcement made by H. E. the Viceroy, the speeches in Parliament made by the Secretary of State, the Prime Minister and others, and to the speech made by Lord Birkenhead on various occasions since the debate in Parliament. They do not disclose any equality of status or power or opportunities to Indian Committees. The two letters of Sir John Simon addressed to the Viceroy and to Sir Sankaran Nair, laying down the line of procedure have made it abundantly clear that in truth no such equality is vouchsafed to Indian Committees. The recording of some evidence *in camera*, the inability of Indian members to vote at the proceedings of the Commission, the power reserved to the Chairman to allow or not to allow members of the Central Committee to examine witnesses in province, and the secondary place assigned to the Indian Committee's report, make it abundantly plain that the Committees can at best play a subordinate part. We desire to draw attention pointedly to the fact that even the proposals of the Responsivist Party which had not been endorsed by other parties have not met with any response from the Commission. For these reasons those parties which would under conditions of equality of status, power and opportunities have agreed to work in co-operation with the Commission, have felt it their duty to hold aloof from the Commission. The Congress Party has always stood out for a round table conference, and it is obvious that it could not be expected to agree to a Commission of such a character.

"We feel therefore that the responsibility for the situation so created must rest (1) on the Government of India (2) the British Government and (3) the Commission.

"In the circumstances, we appeal to public men of all parties and to all political organisations in India to unite together (1) in settling sectional or communal differences, which we have every confidence will be settled soon to the satisfaction of all



parties (2) to prepare a draft constitution with the maximum amount of agreement, and to adopt it at a Convention and (3) to work for its establishment.

"We also appeal to the Legislative Councils of the United Provinces, Bengal, Bombay, Punjab and Behar and Assam to follow the example of the Legislative Assembly, and of the Central Provinces and Madras. We dare not appeal to the Council of State."

### The Commission's Statement

The following is the statement of the Commission inviting the submission of statements or memoranda from official and non-official sources, and was issued to the press early in March 1928 :—

"The Indian Statutory Commission invites the submission of written statement or memoranda both from official and non-official sources, from representative associations, local bodies and responsible individuals on any of the enquiry which it is about to undertake. Before the Commission returns to India in October, the programme of its sittings in various centres will have to be drawn up, written statements or memoranda now called for should be prepared and sent to the offices of the commission as soon as possible in order that the commission may appreciate the main issues to be raised and the proposals to be urged before it hereafter and in order that it may make arrangements beforehand for the orderly conduct of its subsequent enquiry. Such written statement or memoranda, as are ready before the commission leaves India on March 31st, should be sent by registered post addressed to "The Indian Statutory Commission, camp, India". After this date the Commission will maintain its own office in India where further Memoranda will be received on its behalf. They should be sent by registered post addressed to "The Indian Statutory Commission, New Delhi," office, New Delhi from which office they will be transmitted to the office of the Commission in England.

"Twelve copies of each memorandum are required in the first instance. Further copies may be called for thereafter if the proposed Indian committees are set up in time.

"It is most desirable that these memoranda should be delivered to the offices of the commission as soon as possible and in any event not later than June 1st next. If for any special reason particular documents cannot be delivered till later, the commission will be glad to be informed of the circumstances, and will do its best to deal with them. But the organisation of the commission's enquiry makes it essential that written material much of which has doubtless already been prepared, should be promptly presented.

"The terms of reference under which the Commission is acting are as follows :—

"It is "to enquire into the working of the system of Government, growth of education and development of representative institutions in British India and matters connected therewith" and it is "to report as to where and to what extent it is desirable to establish the principle of responsible government or to extend, modify or restrict the degree of responsible government then existing there including the question whether the establishment of second chambers of the local Legislatures is or is not desirable."

The Commission has already had the advantage of informal interviews with important and representative bodies and deputations both at Delhi and in several provinces and has been much assisted by these interviews in appreciating the nature of some of the main questions which it will shortly begin to investigate.

"The Appendix to this notice contains a list of some of these topics (though the list does not profess to be exhaustive), and written statements or memoranda are also invited on any other subject within the Commission's terms of reference. It will be understood that those who submit memoranda are not expected or required to deal with all the subjects mentioned in the Appendix but only such of them or with such other subjects as specially concern the case they are putting forward.

"The Commission attaches special importance to written material which it is now inviting, for in many cases the memorandum will speak for itself, while in other cases the Commission after considering the memorandum (with the assistance of the Indian Committees, if these are appointed) will intimate whether it desires to hear oral evidence in support of the memorandum, and will endeavour to make the most convenient arrangements as to when this oral evidence shall be taken.

"Every memorandum should be dated and signed by or on behalf of those who present it, and should give the address to which any communication from the commission regarding it should be sent. As already stated, there will be many cases in which the memoranda submitted will themselves sufficiently convey to the commission the views of those submitting them, but in cases in which it is desired to tender to the commission oral evidence in support of any memorandum, the document should end with a address of the witness who will be ready to come forward if required for examination and cross-examination.

"Memoranda submitted in representative capacity should contain the nature, extent and membership of the organisation submitting them. When a statement is put forward on behalf of a class of person, the commission wishes to have sufficient indication of the number of individuals who actually authorise it.

"The following appendix is also published :—

"Note (A) For the purpose of illustrating the meaning of the main heads below some of the questions arising under each are given.

"Note (B)—Replies need not deal with the whole field covered by the heads, but should be limited to the particular matters to which it is desired to draw attention.

"Note (C)—Suggestions for the future are invited, as well as observations upon the structure and working of the existing constitution of British India. The Commission will be specially glad to receive any draft constitutional scheme which has been worked out beyond the stage of merely general propositions.

(1) *The representative system as applied to British India e. g. (a) basis of the franchise (b) methods of election, (c) methods whereby particular interests, communal, local, social and economic may obtain adequate representation on local self-governing provincial and central representative bodies (d) the relationship between representatives and constituents, (e) growth of parties (f) growth of informed public opinion, (g) nomination of officials and non-officials, as additional members of elected bodies.*

The suitability of existing areas for legislative and administrative purposes and for the growth of representative institutions, e. g. :—(a) local self-governing. (b) provincial including discussion of proposal for extension of self-governing institutions to other areas than the nine provinces and of proposals for division of the existing provinces.

"The local self-governing bodies (municipalities, district boards, etc.) and their relationship with the provincial government, e. g. :—(a) constitution (b) function (c) relationship with officials of the Provincial Government (d) control by the Provincial Government (e) finance.

"Provincial Governments, e. g. :—(a) constitution (b) working of dyarchy ; (c) position and powers of the Governor (d) Position of Ministers in relation to Governor and Members of Executive Council (e) relationship of Ministers to each other and the question of collective responsibility, (f) the growth of the party system in the Provincial Councils, (g) the working of particular departments, (h) classification into Reserved and Transferred subjects, (i) desirability of second chambers, (j) question of provincial autonomy [see also 6 (a) and (b)] (k) finance of Provincial Governments and financial control (l) financial relations between Reserved and Transferred sides of the Government, including the question of joint or separate purse.

"The Central Government :—(a) Constitution (b) position and powers of the Governor General (c) relationship of the Governor-General to his Executive Council (d) relationship of the Governor General to the Legislative Assembly and the Council of State (e) position of the Executive (f) question of the responsibility of the Executive to the Legislature (g) relationship between two the houses.

"Relations between the Central Government and the provincial Governments e. g. in regard to (a) extent to power of superintendence, direction and control to be exercised by the Central Government (b) classification of subjects as central and

provincial (c) financial relationship between the Central and the Provincial Governments, including the Meston Settlement.

"Courts and judiciary—Constitutional problem in relation to such vital matters as (a) Law and Order in British India (b) justice in British India (c) Defence of India (d) Social progress in British India. (e) Federation in India and (f) the status and position of India in the British Empire and the relationship between the Central Government, the Secretary of State and the British Parliament.

"The position of the services e.g. (a) Indian Civil Services (b) other All-India services, (c) provincial services, (d) the question of recruitment and of Public Services Commission and (e) Indianisation.

"The growth of education : The Commission will shortly be making a special announcement as to this branch of the enquiry, but it does not wish the preparation of memoranda on this important topic to be delayed. Documents dealing specifically with it should be marked "growth of education" in the top left-hand corner.

### Simon's second letter to Viceroy.

On the 27th March Sir John Simon wrote another letter to the Viceroy with the intention of clearing two points which arose during his provincial tour, but more for the purpose, it seemed, of disabusing the public mind from some reports circulated by a press agency that Government was thinking of nominating a Committee to sit with the Commission. Sir John stated that Burma, Punjab and the Council of State had accepted joint free conference, while the Assembly and the U. P. Council had taken the contrary view only "by small majorities" and he was hopeful of success in other Councils. Therefore he made another paper concession, namely that every Provincial Committee will have the same right as the Central Legislative Committee of presenting its report for being printed as appendices. The second concession was that Provincial Committees could depute some of their members for the final conference before the Commission leaves India. The fundamentals were left altogether untouched. The following is the text of the letter :—

"It is now seven weeks since the Indian Statutory Commission made public, by means of my letter addressed to you on the 6th February, the outline of the scheme for conducting the enquiry which the Commission will undertake in October next by method of joint free conference of which the Indian Committees would form one wing while the Commissioners the other. In the interval the scheme proposed has been accepted as a basis for co-operation by the Council of State and by the Legislative Councils of Burma and of the Punjab, while the Legislative Assembly and the United Provinces Council have, by small majorities, adopted resolutions in a contrary sense. Other legislative bodies in India are likely to be considering the matter before the Commission returns, and we think that it would be useful to clear up two points of possible ambiguity which have been brought to our notice in the course of our preliminary visit before we leave at the end of this month.

"(1) We have been asked whether a Provincial Committee after the close of its sittings with us in the Provinces, would have an opportunity of summarising its own views in a report which we might consider before arriving at our own conclusion. Our reply is that if, at the end of the sittings of the joint conference in any Province, the Provincial Committee wishes to express its own view in a report and furnishes the report to us in time, we shall be glad to give this report full consideration as one of the documents before us, and further that we would, in due course, include such report in appendices which will be printed and presented to Parliament.

"(2) It has been pointed out to us that the necessity of the Commission passing from one Province to another in accordance with a pre-arranged time table might result in placing one Province at a disadvantage as compared with another. A Province which was visited early in our itinerary might suffer because its Committee had conferred with us before certain matters which might emerge at later stages of our tour had become prominent. We think that there is force in this criticism and we shall be glad to arrange after we have been round the Provinces and before we

finally leave India to meet representatives from each of the Provincial Committee if they desire it in order to hear from them their final views or confer with them on outstanding matters which seem to require treatment by this means "

### The 'Pioneer' on the Commission.

"Despite the optimistic generalisations of Sir John Simon, "The Pioneer" does not believe that the preliminary visit of the Statutory Commission to India has been a success. It is quite true that sections of the community have greeted their visits to different parts of the country with some enthusiasm, the main result of which has been to mislead the gratified recipients. It is true also that certain bodies of public men have notified their willingness to co-operate with the activities of Sir John Simon and his colleagues. But if these receptions and promises are examined it will be found that support is sectional and spasmodic and by no means representative of political India. Of course, it may be argued that even if political India were unanimous, in proffering support and co-operation for and with the Simon Commission only a small proportion of the vast public of India would be affected. This, we consider, to be a puerile argument. Any constitution must be worked by the politically-minded members of the society for which the reform or the constitution is to function and any form of government which would venture to function without taking into consideration even the views of an acknowledged minority, is bound to be viewed with distaste, if not with positive hatred. An efficient and alien rule will never be preferred to an autonomous and inefficient one, and this principle must be remembered in all dealings with a country in which it is proposed to examine the incomplete constitution which, at the present moment, it admittedly possesses.

"The two months of the Simon Commission in India have demonstrated that there are two firm convictions in the minds of most politically-minded Indians. The first is that somehow or other, despite the acknowledged honesty of motive inspiring Sir John Simon, the bureaucrats in Delhi and Whitehall will manage so to handle the Commission, the evidence to be brought before it and the report itself, that India will not get a fair deal. The second feeling is one of indignation and anger at what is thought to be the implied insult to Indian nationality in that the appointments to the Commission excluded any Indian. These two dominant feelings are at the back of and inspire all opposition to Sir John Simon and his colleagues. And the problem which, for the sake of true British prestige must be built between the present Commission and its opposition? It is no use deluding oneself with the belief that opposition will crumble and disappear. That is not the opinion of "The Pioneer." On the contrary, there is ample evidence for the belief that when the Commission returns in the autumn, and nothing is done in the meantime, the opposition will be stronger and more virulent than ever. It is no use adopting what ought to be an obsolete attitude, but which unfortunately is all too common in certain circles, of announcing that what India says does not matter. It is no use uttering fair words, and, like some prominent would-be legislators in London, keeping firm to the belief in their heart of hearts that no Dominion Status with its various implications is possible. If the problem is not solved, India will drift into the same condition as Ireland drifted in the terrible days of the Black and Tans. And whatever people may think no nation can govern or direct the affairs of another group of nations by force alone. Unless Great Britain can live in the future as the purveyor of political ideas superior to those of the rest of the world, her fate will, indeed, be a gloomy one.

"The problem is not insoluble and even at this stage a frank policy, frankly conceived and honestly carried out would, we believe, ensure peace. It is impossible for the British Parliament to alter the construction of the Statutory Commission. It is not, however, impossible for His Excellency the Viceroy to assert himself on behalf of the many elements of opposition among the people for whom he is responsible. Unless His Excellency is purposely kept in ignorance of the true state of affairs, he must, by now, view with considerable regret the advice that his Government cabled to Whitehall last year to prevent Indians being appointed to the Commission. He must, by now, be looking for some middle way which will preserve the credit of the King-in-Parliament and yet satisfy the desires of the King's Indian Subjects. There is already some vague and nebulous talk about a

parallel commission. Some such solution "The Poincaré" has been examining for some time past, and it considers that it is time to make some definite suggestions for the situation. To begin with, let the Viceroy candidly admit that the situation is not a happy one. Let him state that it is his duty to make provision for peace in his time. What is there then to prevent His Excellency appointing an independent Commission of seven, from names suggested by the Assembly, from a panel, the members of which would be acceptable to and respected by all political parties. It may be urged that unanimity about such a seven is impossible of attainment. To believe this is to take up an utterly pessimistic view of the future of India. This Commission—the Viceroy's Commission—would have to possess equal status with the Simon Commission and similar powers. Every scrap of evidence that would be submitted to and examined by the Simon Commission would have to be submitted to, and examined by the Viceroy's seven. They could sit side by side; they could hear evidence conjointly. If they wished to hold separate sessions—such sessions could be easily arranged. The question of in camera evidence is a matter for arrangement. A joint vote could determine the necessity for hearing evidence in secret, and, if there was a deadlock, the Viceroy could be brought in to decide. Such a Commission's report would be, in the first instance, submitted to the Viceroy, and not only forwarded to the Secretary of State for India, but also broadcasted to the world.

"If such an offer were made by His Excellency, who would dare refuse it? A Swaraj refusal would be a denial of the validity of any practical political theory and a refusal to believe in ordered government. It would be tantamount to admitting that their case does not bear examination and commitment to paper. It falsifies any previous argument that may have been raised as to the question of a fair deal, because a logical reasoned report from such a body could not but have its influence on the ultimate decision of Imperial Parliament. It would, if accepted, carry with it the co-operation of the Legislative Assembly and the Provincial Councils, and though there are doubtless many Indian politicians who would not be satisfied, there is yet, we believe, a sufficient body of moderate well-intentioned opinion, which would be willing, in such circumstances, to place its evidence before the examining bodies and to give them the benefit of practical experience.

"There will, of course, be those on both sides who will shun any solution. To those on the British side who would raise objections, we have little to say, for theirs must be an attitude on which no amount of logical argument can have any effect. There may be those who would consider such an offer as involving a loss of prestige on the part of Great Britain, but such in truth is not the case. No prestige can be lost when a country does its level best to meet opposition, to mitigate the consequences of an unfortunate mistake, and by generous statesmanship, to consolidate allegiance. Those Indians who would still find it impossible to co-operate are in an equally parlous state. Their continued opposition would, in effect, put them out of the world of practical politics into an easily identified realm of impossible fanaticism. Either they want to do their best for India, or else they are not only indifferent to the welfare of their country but also gravely endangering their own political future. A Viceroy's Commission constituted from members nominated by the Legislative Assembly, with powers and status equal to the Simon Commission, would be an offer almost impossible of refusal, and one which, we are firmly convinced, would pave the way to a better understanding and a more healthy set of relationships, between this country and Great Britain. The evolution of Dominion status must proceed by political reality. Its advocates on both sides have in such an offer an opportunity to justify their words and their beliefs; the Viceroy will write his name on the roll of his country's greatest statesmen, and Indian politicians would have the opportunity of proving their worth, their sincerity, and above all their sense of the practical necessities of the present difficult situation.

### Lord Olivier on Simon Boycott.

In May 1928 Lord Olivier wrote the following in "The Contemporary Review":—

The situation which developed immediately on the appointment for the Simon Commission, and which still persists, is exceedingly disappointing to all, at any rate

in this country, who desire substantial progress towards Indian self-government. In this "Review," in August last, I referred to the rumours then current that the Government was intending, at an early date, to appoint the Statutory Commission. I then said :—

"The Swarajist and other Indian Nationalist parties exhibit a certain degree of disinclination that this course should be taken. They distrust the quality and temper of any Commission that may be appointed by a Government which they believe to be unsympathetic to their cause ; and they suspect an inclination that the Commission should engage in its survey at a moment when distrust of the future of self-governing institutions for India has been fomented by the continual advertisement of the Hindu-Muslim dissensions."

I had in the same article explained the distrust of many Indian Nationalists in the sincerity of the intentions of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, and I said that if the developments of the next two years should not do more to satisfy Indian feeling as to our sincerity than those Reforms, well-intentioned as they were, had succeeded in doing, there might be worse trouble in India than followed the Rowlatt Acts and Amritsar. The immediate cardinal test of that sincerity in the judgment of all Indian political parties, appeared, I said, to be the willingness of the British Government to invite Indians to propose a concerted scheme of progressive reform before the Statutory Commission should get to work.

The Government decided to open proceedings strictly within the lines indicated in the Act of 1919, and in the first place to appoint a British Parliamentary Commission. This mode of procedure was agreed to by the Labour and Liberal Parties, which consented to the appointment of representatives of each to the Commission, on the understanding that the Indian Legislature should be invited also to appoint a body of representatives to co-operate with the British Commission in their inquiries. The appointment to the Commission was prematurely announced in India before the intention was made known in Parliament here. No explanatory or preparatory statement could therefore be made of the methods in which it was contemplated that its work should proceed. The bold announcement of the intended appointment and membership of the Commission aroused immediate and general indignation among all reformers of all parties and denominations in India. Whether or not that indignation was reasonable or justifiable, it is desirable to understand the grounds of it.

#### AN AFFRONT TO INDIA

First, it was taken as an affront to India that no Indians should have been placed upon the Commission. Secondly, quite independently of any opinions as to the open-mindedness and unprejudiced character of the membership, it was felt that a purely British Commission, predominantly informed from the side of Indian officialism, which, it was known, had prepared a mass of material for its guidance, could not possibly be in a position to form unbiassed judgments. Thirdly, and, this being a point of national pride, perhaps most strongly, there was the fact that the Indian Reform movement is a Nationalist movement, claiming the right of self-determination, and its spokesmen and representatives were not disposed to plead as suppliants to a British Commission or the British Parliament for just so great an instalment of further self-government as the rulers might think it reasonable to concede to them.

I have mentioned the understanding on which the Labour Party agreed to co-operate in the work of the Simon Commission, and in both Houses of Parliament the character of that understanding was clearly stated. The English Commission and the Indian representative delegates should, we contemplated, sit together and jointly examine and cross-examine all witnesses and consider all documents laid before them. Neither Lord Birkenhead nor Mr. Baldwin made any public promise that so liberal a course would be followed, stating only that it would be entirely open to the Commission to make such arrangements as they pleased. Only on February 6th, in India, did Sir John Simon announce that the Commission would be prepared to follow this course, reserving, however, the right to each national body to sit separately and in private.

The announcement of the Commission was thus launched in untowards circumstances, and a storm of prejudice had been aroused before even the best that could be said for the course intended could be explained. Having regard to all the circumstances, the Labour Party were in accord with the Liberal Party and with the Government that the kind of Commission that was appointed was the only kind suitable to appoint if the Government were to act in strict continuity with the provisions of the Act of 1919. Unless that Act were to be altogether ignored and a totally distinct procedure adopted, such as what Indian reformers have repeatedly asked for under the description of a "Round Table Conference" that was the only opening move the Government could suitably make. Of the Labour and Liberal Parties it may be said without reservation that they desired the Commission to be appointed in the sincere intention that it should set India on the road to self-government. So far as the action of the Conservative Government was concerned, no question of its good faith could fairly arise on the face of the position. There was nothing in its action to prejudice the cause of progress in Indian reform. There was under the circumstances nothing inherently insulting to India or necessarily wounding to Indian pride in the fact that the Commission was not constituted jointly of Indians and British. There was certainly in the acquiescence of Labour and Liberalism in such an arrangement no shadow of any sentiment in this slightest degree belittling to Indians.

I cannot say how far this first entirely uncalled for feeling of Indians that all British parties had insulted India may have died or be dying away. It appears to friends of India wholly mistaken : it is painful to us to have it imputed, and any such mistaken and erroneous belief must needs weaken the position of any political body that entertain it. We do not wish the position of Indian reformers to be thus weakened, and we are therefore distressed at the feeling of grievance on this account also. It remains of course that Indians may think we ought to recognise that we have insulted them, and the fact that we are too stupid and insensible to see that ourselves only show that all Britons are quite incapable of dealing intelligently with our relations with Indians. The practical fact remains that those relations have to be settled between us and them.

Supposing that the full intentions of the British political parties and the Commission with regard to procedure had been made fully clear from the outset, and that there had been a less universal adoption by Indians of a position from which it is difficult for them now to recede, there would nevertheless remain some causes of dissatisfaction with the procedure and some arguments for the maintenance of their determination to boycott. For the arrangements proposed by Sir John Simon do not in fact go quite so far in the establishment of complete equality and complete publicity for the canvassing of all evidence as Indians consider necessary for an entirely fair handling of the questions in hand. I do not propose here to criticise the validity of those causes of dissatisfaction ; it could be of little practical use. I return to the mere statement of the facts of the situation as they now appear to be.

#### SPIRIT OF HOSTILE DISTURB

Outside of the Mahomedan community, which is divided (the United Moslem League being in favour of co-operation with the Commission, but a minority led by Mr. Jinnah being solid with all the Hindu political parties for boycott), all Indian political leaders and practically all politicians of the Reform movement are filled with a spirit of hostile distrust towards the all British political parties equally. That is highly regrettable, and appears to us to show some limitation of intelligence of realities. This attitude, so far as it arise from the feeling of insult, is distressing not only by injustice but because it excludes us from giving any co-operation and, in so far as it is a positive error, is a source of weakness to the Indian Reform party. There, however, it is.

With regard to the relations between the Moslem co-operators and the Hindu boycotters, and in a minor degree between the Moslem boycott section and the Hindu nationalist parties, the great cause of division is the principle of communal representation. The Moslem majority demand separate representation in the various Legislative Councils and local bodies on the basis of population, a system of separate electorates, a corresponding Moslem share of appointments in the public services.

The conflict between the Moslem community and the Hindu parties with regard

to the basis of representation is crucial. Mr. Jinnah has endeavoured to establish a compromise with the Hindus for the sake of being able to present a united Reform programme, on the basis of having a common electoral roll, with a reservation of a certain number of seats for Moslems proportional to the number of the local Moslem community. The majority of Moslems stand out absolutely for separate electoral rolls, directly electing their own communal representatives proportional in number to their population. Their reason for adhering to this position as against that of joint electorates and reservation of seats has been explained by a distinguished Moslem as being that "if the majority community desires to send a few ignorant, mean, contemptible and thoroughly un-Moslem candidates as representatives of our community it can easily do it, as our minority votes will be swamped by the majority votes of the other community." It is characteristic of Indian political disputants that they seem always to give the strongest weight to the most extreme hypothesis of contingencies conceivably unfavourable to themselves. At the present moment the prevailing sentiment expressed in the Press and on platforms of the reformist movement is that all British political parties, and the whole British electorate, are now engaged in a conspiracy to diminish their freedom, and have devised the scheme of the Simon Commission as the best means of doing so. We cannot therefore be surprised if Moslems are convinced that any proposal on the part of Hindus as a means of securing their minority rights is also meant as a trap.

#### COMMUNAL REPRESENTATION

The system of communal representation is a disastrous expedient, bound to be fatal to the satisfactory working of any constitution that embodied it. It is an obvious and admitted fact that the existence of the communal electoral system now aggravates and exacerbates communal rivalries and hostilities between Indians whose political interests, in all matters falling within the sphere of the mechanism of Government, are independent of creed. Moreover, the expedient is in itself ineffective. As Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru (himself one of the boycotters) has well put it.

"The Mahomedans may insist on separate electorates—but the insistence on the one or the other representation is not enough. It seems to me that we are bound to arrive at certain conclusions :

- (1) that there is need for the adequate political representation of the minorities.
- (2) that no protection of the minorities can go the length of converting them into a majority : and (3) that in any democratic constitution of a mixed population the minority should, subject to the limits prescribed for the protection of its special interests, be prepared to accept the decisions of the majority."

Whether, however, the attitude of the Moslems is reasonable or not and whether or not it is possible that any substitute can be found for this expedient to protect minorities (which is what Sir J. Simon's Commission will have to advise), we must accept, as an immediate fact of the situation, that the organised Moslem community will pretty certainly, as a whole, stand out for that principle. Also that they will be found to receive very strong support in their demand from the British in India (as they do from Sir Reginald Cradock) and generally from all those who do not desire the establishment of a satisfactorily working Indian self-government constitution. And I do not think I wrong the Moslem community in believing that they count upon that support. Moreover, whilst I am not prepared to say that their desire to impress this part of their case upon the Simon Commission is more than one of the reasons for Moslems' disposition to co-operate with it, yet I think that the fact that, on grounds entirely reasonable (as in the general interests of Indian Reform), they are prepared so to co-operate, is an additional cause for regret that the Hindu parties persist in throwing away the advantage to that cause of their co-operation, since one result of their refusal will be to strengthen the probability of the disastrous principle of communal electorates coming to the fore. British public and Parliamentary judgment. And whether the British public and Parliamentary judgment think it dignified to recognise the fact or not, that is really what those who desire Indian constitutional reform have to deal with.

The basis of co-operation offered in Sir John Simon's letter of February 6th was promptly refused by the leaders of the various Indian parties, principally on the fol-



owing grounds : (1) Government officials and the Members of the Legislature nominated by the Government were to be allowed to take part along with the elected members in the election of the Indian committees. (2) No provision was made for the election to the Indian committees of persons who were not already members of the Indian legislatures, though this point was left open to the Commissioners in Mr. Baldwin's speech in the House of Commons. (3) The Committee of the Central Indian Legislature was restricted to the consideration of central subjects and treated as a disconnected element during the inquiry in the various Provinces. (4) All Indian members might be excluded entirely from hearing evidence that might be given "in camera." This is regarded by Indians as a fatal stumbling-block to co-operation, especially in view of their experience in connection with evidence received "in camera." (5) There is no provision for the co-operation of the Indian committees in the institution and conduct of subsidiary inquiries—proceedings of investigation other than the joint taking of evidence by the combined committees of the several Legislatures. (6) Indian leaders felt very strongly that the aim of the Commission should be, along with the Indian committees, to endeavour to arrive at an agreed report. This did not appear to be contemplated in the terms of Sir John Simon's letter.

#### INDIAN COMMITTEES AND THE COMMISSION.

In the debate in the Assembly on the proposal to boycott the Simon Commission, Mr. Jayakar, the leader of the responsive co-operation party declared that the door was still open for negotiations if Indians could co-operate with the Commission on what they considered honourable terms. He insisted that the Indian committees should have equal status with the Statutory Commission, in which case Indians were still open to consider co-operation. He suggested that it would be easy to explore and find out exactly what they would consider equality by means of negotiations between Sir John Simon and six or seven Indian leaders. Mr. Jinnah also offered to co-operate if Indians could be assured of equality of status and authority. He stressed the point that Indians did not deny the need for an inquiry, nor did they deny the ultimate authority of the British Parliament. They insisted, however, on having an equal share in framing the proposal.

It is impossible to say whether the attitude set forth in the last paragraph can be taken as one in which the whole constellation of Indian reformers would combine. For although the Labour Party at least have advocated precisely this position, that has been as fiercely denounced as the rest of the British political world as having betrayed the interests of Indian reform and shown themselves unworthy of India's confidence. In hundreds of newspaper articles and speeches, Indian reformers have denounced the Labour Party from Mr. McDonald downwards as Imperialists and reactionaries, seeking only to bind more closely on India the chains of British bureaucracy. It is difficult to speak of that fact without using unconciliatory adjectives about the intelligence and capacity for judgment of realities which it seems to embody. But the attitude has been adopted by men and women whom I myself and many others of my friends and theirs, know too well to be able to think, far less, in a controversy so riddled with prejudice as this is, to say of them anything censorious or uncivil ; for we believe that if we could entirely understand, as we cannot, how such delusions and such mistakes can have arisen, we should recognise that there was really, no perversity in the minds of our friends, but only obscuration of the facts of the case. For the present we can only discern the fact that all British opinion, however devoted it has been in the past, and is to-day, to the cause of Indian Nationalism, is just now in disgrace with all sections of Indian Nationalists. I do not believe that it can be unimportant for Indians that they should have and should know that they have innumerable supporters and sympathisers in this country.

#### Equality of Status Conceded.

ON THE 23RD MAY, the Simon Commission met in London and formally and unanimously resolved that "it is desirable to publish the fact that it is not proposing to make any fresh announcement regarding the procedure already proposed which, it considers, provides suitable basis for co-operation." Notwithstanding this decision, the Committee elected by the Punjab Legislative Council to co-operate with

the Commission, consisting of Europeans, Mahomedans and Hindus who had no sympathy with the boycotters, passed unanimously and communicated to Sir JOHN SIMON the following resolution :

"The members of this Committee are strongly of opinion that it will be difficult for them adequately and properly to discharge their duties and responsibilities, if any distinction is sought to be made between the members of the Indian Statutory Commission and the members of the Committee in the matter of the examination of witness or access to documentary evidence, and that conclusions based on examination of portions only of the evidence will not command public confidence."

The resolution was backed up by statements on the part of some of the members of the Committee that unless their demand was satisfied, they will not be able to take part in the Committee's work. There were also other indications in the Press suggesting that the house of cards laboriously built up in the Punjab for the accommodation of the Commission by the efforts of SIR MALCOLM HAILEY and of the officials there, was in danger of an unexpected collapse and there was no doubt that to SIR JOHN SIMON this must have looked like the signal of an impending landslide. Apparently, as was indicated in a Simla telegram, through the good offices of the Viceroy, immediate steps were taken to patch up and buttress the situation. The following is the Government Communique :—

"His Excellency the Viceroy has received from the Secretary of State the following telegram, which has been communicated by the Government of the Punjab to the Committee of the Punjab Legislative Council appointed to co-operate with the Indian Statutory Commission :

"The resolution of the Committee appointed by the Punjab Council to co-operate with the Indian Statutory Commission was duly communicated to the latter body, and has been most carefully considered. It raises a question which also interest the other Indian Committees that may be appointed under the scheme of procedure proposed by the Commission, and I, therefore, think it well to communicate the concession arrived at to you for publication.

"The Commission has decided to draw no distinction between its own members and the members of these Committees in regard to the matters referred to in the resolution, so that in the matter of examination of witnesses and accessible documents, the Commission will treat each Indian Committee, within whose scope the material in question falls, on equal terms with itself. It considers that the reservation made in Sir John Simon's letter to the Viceroy, of February 6 which in any event would have been put into effect, very rarely, if at all, can be adequately secured by the power which rests with the Chairman to protect any witness and by his discretionary power to exclude the press from the joint sittings, when necessary. I think Your Excellency will share my satisfaction at this decision."

### Simon's third letter to Viceroy

On the 11th SEPTEMBER another Commission storm arose over the message sent by Sir John Simon to His Excellency the Viceroy asking Lord Irwin to complete the composition of the Central Legislative Committee.

The Swarajist and Nationalist members of the Assembly declared that this was a "slight on the dignity of the Assembly" in view of the Central Legislature's refusal to co-operate with the Commission, and a manifesto, signed by over 60 members, was subsequently issued demanding a general election on the issue involved. The following in the text of Sir John Simon's letter :—

"The Provincial Committee elected by the Bombay Legislative Council will sit with the Commission at Poona, and six out of the eight remaining Provincial Councils have also already decided to co-operate with us.

"As regards the proposed Central Committee, Your Excellency will remember that in our letter of February 6, which contemplated a Committee chosen by both Houses of the Indian Legislature, we laid stress on the fact that we had no wish to dictate its precise composition but were concerned to secure that it should not be composed of an unwieldy number and should be, as far as may be, representative of British

India as a whole. Although the Council of State has resolved to appoint its members to such a Committee, the majority of the Legislative Assembly has taken a different view, and the Commission feels that the time has come when we ought to request Your Excellency to invite the Council of State to elect its proportion of members. We should be grateful if Your Excellency would complete the composition of the Committee in such a manner as you may think most appropriate.

"We trust that the Central Committee will be able to meet us on October 13 at Poona, and as soon as the names of the Committee are available we propose to arrange as rapidly as possible for the supply to them of the materials which will come under our joint consideration.

"We should like to make it plain that we contemplate that this Committee as constituted should perform all those functions suggested for the Central Committee in our letter of February 6, and, in particular, we shall be glad if the Committee so desire to include its report as an annexure to our own document, so that both may be presented to the King-Emperor and made public at the same time."

### **The Assembly Members' Manifesto.**

THE following is the text of the manifesto issued by the members of the Central Legislature as a reply to Sir John Simon's cable.

"We, the undersigned members of the Indian Legislative Assembly, have carefully considered the telegram received by the Viceroy from Sir John Simon in which the Viceroy is requested to invite the Council of State to elect its proportion of members of the proposed committee of the Central Legislature to co-operate with the Statutory Commission and so far as the Legislative Assembly is concerned to complete the composition of the said committee in such a manner as he may think most appropriate.

"We are surprised, notwithstanding the clear majority of the vote of the Legislative Assembly in this behalf passed on February 18 last and the trend of public feeling made clear during the debate thereon, that Sir John Simon should still persist in evading the weighty and representative opinion of this Assembly on such an important question.

"We are convinced that on the issue relating to the constitutional scheme and other matters connected with the said Commission the voice of the Assembly more truly and faithfully represents Indian public opinion than any contrary resolution passed in the Council of State or several provincial legislatures. We are still not without hope that His Excellency the Viceroy will not agree to perpetrate on the Legislative Assembly a grave constitutional impropriety amounting to a slight on its dignity and representative character as suggested in the said message. But in the event of the Viceroy being inclined to act otherwise, we demand that with a view to ascertaining unmistakably the public sentiment in the country on this important question, the Central Legislature may be dissolved and fresh elections take place on the issue involved in the resolution passed by the Assembly in this matter."

### **Members of the Central Committee.**

On the 25th September it was officially announced that the Central Committee to sit with the Simon Commission would consist of Sir C. Sankaran Nair, Sir Arthur Froom, Raja Nawab Ali (all elected members of the Council of State) and the following members nominated by H. E. the Viceroy:—Sardar Shivdeo Singh Uberoi (of the Council of State), and Nawab Sir Zulfiqar Ali Khan, Sir Hari Singh Gour, Dr. A. Suhrawardy, Mr. Kikabhai Premchand and Rao Bahadur M. C. Raja (of the Assembly) with Sir C. Sankaran Nair to act as Chairman.

### **The Commission's Second Landing.**

Sir John Simon and other members of the Statutory Commission arrived in Bombay at 8-30 in the evening of the 11th. October 1928 by the S. S. "Maloja" which came alongside the Mole Station at 9 p.m. The Commission was received by the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bombay, the Reforms Secretary, the Commissioner of Police, the Sheriff and the A.D.C. to the Governor.

Mr. A. H. Ghuznavi, Secretary, Central Legislators Muslim Association, went

aboard the steamer, and met the deputation. The Dewan of Darbhanga then presented a message of welcome on behalf of the Maharaja of Darbhanga, who was unable to come.

At half-past ten, the Commission disembarked and boarded a special train waiting for them at the Mole station and were met there unofficially by some members of the depressed classes, some Mahomedans and Parsees, who especially came to welcome the Commission. The Commissioners were profusely garlanded.

About five hundred anti-Simonite demonstrators had collected outside the Ballard Pier Gate, and "Simon go back" was shouted as every car passed by. They were carrying black-flags and posters which were not visible in the darkness of the night.

#### Arrival at poona.

Next day, the 12th. October the Commission arrived at Poona in the morning. The railway station was gaily decorated and crowded by visitors whose admission was regulated by passes. Distinguished among those present, included the members and Ministers of the Bombay Government, the Provincial Council Simon Committee, the Central Simon Committee and the Hartog Committee.

The Commission received an address of welcome from the Poona Suburban Municipality, which was read by Nawabshah Rookshayar Jung.

The Municipality deemed it an uncommon privilege to be the first public body to give the Commission a civic reception and greeting the members of the "greatest Commission, which the world's oldest and greatest Parliament ever sent to India for investigation of her political requirements," the address assured that reforms had been an appreciable success, but India now considered that she had a just claim to self-government within the Empire. They attached the greatest importance to the evolution of Local Self-Government as the basis of popular government, and in this connection expected a gigantic transformation. The Commission, the address hoped, would achieve success which would redound to their great credit and confer inestimable boons upon India. The address was presented to Sir John Simon in a silver casket, and Sir John Simon was garlanded along with the other six members.

Replying on behalf of the Commission Sir John in an extempore speech said : "The Statutory Commission thank you and your colleagues most heartily for the address you have presented to us, and for your presence here. We feel we have been given every encouragement that we would desire in the beginning of our great task. You have said that local self-government is an essential part of representative institutions. A good citizen is he who takes interest and takes part in the government of his own country.

Continuing Sir John said : "We are deeply conscious of the importance of the enquiry which we are about to enter into and rejoice that we have in this the help of the representative committee elected by the Bombay Legislative Council. We should wish to assure you all those who are present here and those whom my voice can reach that we come here with a single desire to contribute what we can as friends in helping India and all her people." ( Loud applause. )

#### BOYCOTT DEMONSTRATION NEAR STATION.

Outside the station a crowd of spectators gathered while owing to Police control and restriction of traffic, the boycott party held a demonstration at a little distance from the station. Elaborate Police arrangements were made for the occasion, and roads were being guarded. The City presented a deserted appearance as a complete hartal was being observed. The Reay Market and Budhawar Raviwar Peth, which form the chief centres of business, were closed. Grain merchants and timber merchants as per resolutions of their associations, suspended all business. Black flags were displayed in prominent places. A mass meeting was held in the evening in front of the Shanwar Wada. Professor Paranjpye, who was voted to the chair, congratulated Poona on the disciplined manner in which they conducted their procession. He invited the Commissioners to attend personally these meetings if they wanted to know India's opinion. He condemned the Simon Commission for being led by ear by the Communalist.

## THE COMMISSION BEGINS WORK.

*Poona—15th. October, 1928.*

The Statutory Commission, sitting with the Central and Provincial Committees, styled as the Joint Free Conference, commenced its task at Poona on the 15th. Oct. Sir John Simon presided. The Conference devoted the first day's sitting to a lengthy examination of Mr. Turner, officiating Chief Secretary to the Bombay Government. But before that the Commission held a private conference to further discuss some points of procedure.

The seating arrangement was in a semi-circle, each wing having its chairman in the middle. Four Commissioners and the Bombay Council Committee sat to the right of Sir John Simon and two Commissioners and nine members of the Central Committee to the left. Membership of the Conference was as follows :

Mr. Raja, Mr. Kikabhai Premchand, Sardar Shivdeo Singh, Raja Nawab Ali, Sir Sankaran Nair, Dr. Suhrawardy, Sir Arthur Froom, Sir Hari Singh Gour and Nawab Zulfikar Ali Khan ( Central Committee ) ; Lord Strathcona, Mr. Hartshhorn, Sir John Simon, Lord Burnham, Col. Lane-Fox, Major Attlee and Mr. Cadogan ( Statutory Commission ) ; Mr. Abdul Latif, Mr. Miller, Mr. Ambedkar, Mr. Bhutto, Mr. Mazumdar, Mr. Patel, and Mr. Muhamed Shah. ( Provincial Committee ).

Sir John Simon, opening the Joint Free Conference, made some interesting preliminary remarks. He said :—"The section of the Government of India Act under which the Commission is appointed and the warrant of appointment itself laid down accurately the purposes and scope of the inquiry which the Commissioners, with the help of their colleagues who compose the Central and Provincial Committees, are about to undertake. We are appointed for the purpose of inquiring into the working of the system of Government, the growth of education and the development of representative institutions in British India and matters connected therewith.

"So far as the growth of education is concerned this branch of the inquiry is for the moment in the hands of the Auxiliary Committee composed of three British and three Indian members, and its chairman hopes to be able to furnish us before the end of December with the results of the review which that Committee is engaged in making. Later in our tour, with the help of the Central Committee, we shall examine this document, and hope to have the advantage of discussing it with the Education Committee.

### EDUCATION REPORT.

"In the same way we have made arrangements whereby each Provincial Committee will have an opportunity of meeting us at a later part of our tour, and the report of the Education Committee will be one of the subjects which no doubt they will like to confer with us upon. But in view of the inquiry that is being conducted by the Education Auxiliary Committee the conference came to the decision on Saturday that the conference should not at present examine witnesses with reference to education. We shall treat with this most important part of our inquiry, but do not wish to duplicate it. There are a number of very important subjects which come within the scope of our inquiry and which crop up in the memoranda again and again and almost in every Province. Now we must organize our inquiry so as to avoid needless repetition. It must not be supposed, therefore, that we are ignoring an important subject because it is not made the topic of extensive evidence at every place we visit in India. There will be a number of cases wherein the convenient and practical course will be to examine any topic thoroughly at one place, and if we examine it at one place it none the less will have its bearing upon the question whenever it may arise in India.

Sir John Simon continued :—"Let me give one or two examples. The European Association and the Associated Chambers of Commerce have presented us with important memoranda. These, of course, must not only be studied but must be investigated with the help of witnesses, but the conference need not contemplate hearing witnesses even on such an important subject as that again and again in every centre we visit. I made some inquiries into this particular subject, and I believe it will be found convenient to take what I may call the main case of the European Association and

the Associated Chambers of Commerce at Calcutta. Obviously we want to choose some great business centre where we would hear evidence properly and in full. That will greatly shorten the time necessary for the examination of their case, but at the same time, of course, if there is some special feature which one or other of the branches of these bodies wish to emphasize we should not exclude the possibility of that course. For example, the Bombay Chamber of Commerce has contributed a memorandum which amongst other things refers to the very serious question of the financial relations between Bombay and the Central Government. There is possibility that a witness on that subject could be usefully heard from the Chamber; but I deprecate the idea that we can go through the main case again and again.

"I will give another instance. I feel quite certain Dr. Ambedkar and Mr. Rajah will agree with me that the case of the Depressed Classes is unquestionably very important, and one to which we shall wish to give adequate and careful attention, but I do not think we should be expected to go through the case in detail in every place we visit. In this particular Presidency we have the advantage of the memorandum which Dr. Ambedkar himself is partly responsible for. I think it will be useful to hear some evidence on that subject in Bombay, but my inclination is to leave the main case for examination later on, say in Madras.

"The same consideration applies to that very important community, the Anglo-Indian community. The idea is to concentrate on places where the main investigation on a big question can be conducted. This, I think, is true, and I throw out the suggestion that even on matters which are of such widespread and general interest, such as communal questions, we should have such an arrangement."

#### COMMUNAL QUESTION

Sir John Simon continued;—"I think every Province where this communal question is prominent would expect us to hear evidence and give personal attention to the matter, but we must contemplate going into it in general and abstract terms at one or two great centres. For example, Punjab or Bengal are places where evidence will help to elucidate and illuminate the consideration of this great issue. To sum up it must not for one moment be supposed that the conference is not fully alive to the importance of some great questions even though some of these are not dealt with fully or finally at any one provincial centre. There is one other observation I should like to make, and I would respectfully press it on the attention of my Indian colleagues. We must remember that the first task thrown upon the Commission is the task of giving to the very best of their power a true description of the working of the constitutional machinery in India. Before we come to proposing a remedy, a change, and a new constitution it is extremely necessary that we, the Commissioners, with the special help of our Indian colleagues and the witnesses should be in a position to give a just, fair, sympathetic and honest account of the working of the Reforms. We are anxious to learn by the witnesses and by our conference together, and I would beg you not to be impatient if we spend a good deal of time in trying to understand a good deal of detail, and what in fact is the structure of Government in India and the working of its necessarily complicated machinery. For, believe me, nobody, not even the greatest constitutional authority with the most intimate knowledge of Indian affairs,—nobody can wisely prescribe for any disease until he has been conducted a proper diagnosis."

#### Mr. Turner's Evidence.

Mr. C. W. A. Turner, I. C. S., who was called as the first witness, said that he joined the service in 1903. He had been the Collector of two districts, and since 1923, he had been concerned with the Local Self-Government, Education, Medical and Public Health Departments and partly with the Reserved Department dealing with Marine. His political chiefs were both the Minister and the Government Member. He had also acted as chief whip to the Government of Bombay and was now officiating as its Chief Secretary.

Examined by Sir John Simon he said that there was a general electorate for the Bombay Corporation. Parsis, though they numbered only 10,000, had secured 21 seats out of 80 and Mohammedans who formed nineteen per cent of the population had

secured only fourteen seats. He ascribed this result to the Parsis, being very highly educated. Similarly the Bhoro community among the Moslems were very influential in the industrial world.

The Chairman asked whether this result of a general electorate was due to the fact that a great deal of political education and intelligence were concentrated in Bombay and that the situation in the Presidency in local bodies was different.

Mr. Turner replied that that was so in Poona; for example, 11,000 Mohammedans had no chance of returning one member.

Mr. E. C. Cadogan asked why this was so. Mr. Turner explained that Mahomedans outside Bombay were much more scattered and far less influential. There were a very few among the Mohammedans in Poona who were influential.

Sir Arthur Froom asked whether even in the Bombay Municipality the various communities did not really concentrate in various residential areas and voted accordingly. Mr. Turner replied that that was so.

Sir John Simon asked for information regarding the working of District Boards. There were 27 districts. Were not some local self-governing areas too big for efficient administration?

Mr. Turner replied that under the old system a Collector could keep efficient control but under the Reforms some areas were of an undue size for efficient management. For instance, Ahmednagar was of the size of Yorkshire.

Sir John Simon: We think Yorkshire should be divided into three country councils. (Laughter.) Sir John Simon explained that these questions were being put by him merely to get a proper picture and did not suggest that the Commission would recommend a change in district areas, which obviously must be dealt with by the Bombay Legislative Council.

#### COMMUNAL ELECTORATES

Sir John Simon next asked about the extent of communal electorates in the Presidency. Mr. Turner replied that these were found in all District Boards and Municipalities except eleven, and were introduced in 1923, with the exception of where they were introduced in 1917. Sir John Simon said that Sind represented a very special problem and they would deal with it separately in Karachi. He quoted a statement from the Government memorandum that prior to the introduction of the reforms the Government of Bombay had been opposed to the system of communal representation for the purpose of the municipal franchise but after the formation of separate electorates for election to the Legislative Council the principle of representation was extended to all the 157 municipalities, except eleven.

Sir John Simon said that he did not wish to put an embarrassing question but wanted to know the personal experience of Mr. Turner—whether communal representation had led to more satisfactory representation and better administration or not. Mr. Turner replied that, while it would be fair to say that it had led to more satisfactory representation for minorities, it was doubtful whether the introduction of communal representation in local bodies had really led to improved administration.

Sir Hari Singh Gour asked why communal representation was introduced in spite of the Bombay Government's previous dislike of it. Mr. Turner replied that it was due to political pressure as a result of the adoption of this system of Council elections.

Sir Hari Singh Gour said that if it had contributed to deterioration in administration in local bodies, it would lead to deterioration of efficiency in the services when it was extended to them. Mr. Turner replied in the affirmative. Sir John Simon, intervening, said that the broader question should be left over and only the working of local bodies should be examined.

Nawab Sir Zulfiqar Ali Khan asked: What had occasioned this political pressure? Mr. Turner replied that obviously it was not possible to get representation for minorities in many places without communal representation.

Did minorities get justice in the absence of communal representation?—Their interests were liable to suffer.

Q. Do you think it is in the interest of administration to ignore the claims of minorities? A. It is a difficult question. I fully agree that minorities have little or no chance without communal representation and their interests are liable to suffer, but





replied that the collecting staff belonged to the one community or the other. Moreover, a local body having a majority of a particular community or the other found it difficult to put pressure on the realization of dues from that community.

Sir John Simon : But this unwillingness to pay rates is by no means confined to India. We all feel just the same. (Laughter.) You definitely connect this state of affairs with communal representation? Mr. Turner : It has intensified the situation.

Major Attlee asked how the situation was better under the old system when, too, the Collector had a separate municipal tax-collecting staff. Mr. Turner replied that the Collector indirectly used the influence of the revenue staff to collect municipal dues.

Major Attlee inquired if an honorary chairman of a local body was also its executive officer. Mr. Turner replied that the executive officer was different. Major Attlee then asked whether the officer was a man of status and had security of tenure. Mr. Turner replied that he was a qualified officer and could be removed only by the votes of a two-thirds majority.

Viscount Burnham : Does that require the Minister's sanction?—No. A two-thirds majority can remove him.

Mr. Shah Nawaz asked whether the Audit exercised any control, whether action was taken on an Education Inspector's report and whether the budget of schools passed through Collectors. He explained that the object of his questions was to show that the Government exercised considerable financial control over local bodies as well as over school boards. Sir John Simon remarked that the financial question should be dealt with later and Sardar Shivdev Singh Uberoi asked whether communal representation in local bodies was determined by the numerical strength of the various communities. Mr. Turner thought that it was according to the population basis but promised to give fuller information later.

#### EVIDENCE "IN CAMERA"

The Commission concluded the public evidence punctually at one o'clock and reassembled after lunch at 2-30, when it heard in camera Sir Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah, General Member, Bombay Government, who was previously Minister for Local Self-Government and had held a ministerial portfolio ever since the constitution of the Reformed Council. The Commission examined him for an hour and a half and rose at 4 o'clock.

#### POONA—16th OCTOBER 1928

Mr. Turner's examination was resumed to-day. The subject on which he was questioned first was the working of local bodies.

Dr. Suhrawardy's questions elicited the reply from Mr. Turner that the deterioration of municipal administration was due mostly to the non-Brahmins sweeping the boards at the elections and to the lowering of the franchise. He added that the element of non-co-operation had partly contributed to this inefficiency, but was not mainly responsible for it everywhere. For instance, while Gujarat was in the grip of the non-co-operation movement, Karnatak and the Deccan were not affected by it.

Raja Nawabali asked the witness if the introduction of joint electorates with reservation of seats or the method of proportionate representation would solve the problem.

The witness regretted that he could not answer this difficult question off-hand.

Examined by Mr. M. C. Rajah as to what action the reformed Government took to secure their civic rights for the depressed classes, Mr. Turner replied that the Bombay Council had once passed a resolution on the subject.

Sir John Simon : But in England resolutions are held to express pious hopes.—Mr. Turner replied that the resolution was accepted by the Government.

Dr. Ambedkar informed the conference that the resolution had remained a pious hope since 1923 till in 1925 Government were forced to take action and then they undertook to stop only discretionary grants in the case of local bodies which refused access to the public wells and admission into the schools of the depressed classes.

Mr. Turner stated that this penalty was imposed in the case of Kalyan.

Mr. Hartshorn asked whether this municipality had changed its views since.

Mr. Turner did not have information on the subject.

Sir John Simon asked whether in recent years any change had occurred in the treatment of the depressed classes and the facilities given to them for their advancement. Mr. Turner said that twenty-five years ago it was unthinkable that any member of the depressed classes could sit on a local board.

Sir John Simon : What about the position of the masses as a whole ? Mr. Turner replied that the position had improved in respect of wells and schools.

Viscount Burnham asked whether apart from the schools any change had occurred in the normal life of the village. Mr. Turner replied that social life in the villages had remained unchanged but the position in the cities had grown better.

Sir John Simon said that his impression during the last cold weather tour frankly was that the position had improved in the cities but considerable difference existed between the city and the country in this respect.

Mr. Turner, examined by Sir H. S. Gour, said that the Montford Reforms had given some impetus to education and more particularly raised hopes among members of the various communities of getting jobs.

Mr. Turner replied that taxes in arrears in 1916 were three lakhs and the figure for 1926 was Rs. 16,00,000. He added that communal representation had contributed to the present communalism in India.

Cross-examined by Sir H. S. Gour, the witness said that communalism had tainted the judgment of the ministers too, who had to depend on the votes of their parties. He informed Major Atlee that ministers had rather let the local boards stand on their own legs than give them direction and guidance.

Sir John Simon questioned the witness about municipal finances. Mr. Turner and Mr. Wiles explained the existing position and said the present demand for further amenities could not be met, not only because of the unwillingness of rate-payers to levy, or pay extra taxes, but because of the difficulty of finding suitable sources of taxation.

#### INDIANISATION OF THE SERVICES.

The witness was next examined on the question of Indianisation of the services.

He gave Sir John Simon a picture of the existing conditions and the process of Indianisation in the Transferred departments, which probably in fifteen years time would have been entirely Indianised.

Viscount Burnham said that it would be unfair to ask the witness the question whether this would lead to a sacrifice of efficiency. He asked if Europeans could be attracted to these provincial services. Mr. Turner replied : Not the same class of persons who have joined the All-India Services, if at all. The witness added that experts could be engaged on special terms and they had taken one in the Education Department. The Conference then adjourned.

*POONA—18th OCTOBER 1928*

#### Mr. Wiles' Evidence

#### BOMBAY & MESTON SETTLEMENT

After a day's recess, the Simon Joint Free Conference reassembled to-day to hear Bombay's case regarding the revision of the Meston Settlement. Mr. G. Wiles, who had been for five years Finance Secretary to the Bombay Government was the first witness examined.

Sir John Simon read out extracts from the Montagu-Chelmsford Report containing a criticism of the then existing financial system of India, and the proposals made by the authors of the report. After describing the old system of "doles" they recommended a fresh distribution of the sources of revenue between the Central and Provincial Governments, and definitely charged the present Statutory Commission with the duty of re-investigating the question of provincial contributions.

The next stage began with the consideration of the financial scheme by the Selbourne (Joint Parliamentary) Committee, which endorsed the Government of India's view that the financial adjustments be examined by a financial commission. The Meston Committee Report made it clear that it was not called upon to decide on the

distribution of the heads of revenue which had already been decided upon, but was simply to give advice on financial adjustments.

Sir John Simon said that it was true that the Bombay Government's main case was that being an industrial province it was hit as compared with the agricultural provinces by having to depend on land revenue and by surrendering all its income-tax to the Central Government. But whatever the justice of this grievance, it was wrong to fasten it to the Meston Report. Mr. Wiles : That is true, Sir. We criticise the Meston Settlement and not the Meston Report.

Sir John Simon asked whether this was a fair representation of the Meston Settlement and wanted the witness to develop the point and correct him.

Mr. Wiles : You have put it very admirably, Sir.

Sir John Simon : I did not want to be flattered (laughter), but should like to be corrected if I am wrong. Mr. Wiles : Our case is that while Madras has a large income from land revenue and we small, the abolition of the provincial contributions has actually increased the injustice done to us.

Sir John Simon asked whether such a strict division of revenues would not conflict with Indian conditions.

Mr. Wiles thought it was possible to have separation without such conflict.

Sir John Simon said it might look curious to an Englishman to find land revenue entirely drawn from country districts and income tax drawn from urban areas, and that there was no tax on agricultural incomes in towns.

Mr. Wiles : We have a land tax in town as well.

Sir John Simon : So long as you have these separate sources, what would be the balancing factor ? Mr. Wiles : For the purpose of a proper balancing factor we have stated that in the future settlement we shall have a part of the incometax.

Sir John : Should the machinery for the collection of the income-tax be other than Central ? Mr. Wiles : No.

Sir John Simon : Your proposal is that the Government of India should pay over some fraction of the proceeds of the incometax to all the provinces, which fraction would be uniform in the case of all the provinces and that Bombay would get more money, because it pays more incometax. Mr. Wiles : That is so.

Sir John Simon : Have you seen the Todhunter Report on the subject ?

Mr. Wiles : We originally told the Government of India that we agreed with the suggestion in the Todhunter Report regarding division of incometax, but when we worked out details we found not only that the exact figures would not be worked out but that the system might lead to continuous friction between the Provincial and Central Government, so we decided to ask for a definite fraction to the revenue for incometax.

Sir John Simon : I see you want a substantial change, but you suggest that, in any re-arrangement you would not reduce the total revenue of any Provincial Government which they enjoy at present. Mr. Wiles : Yes, we do not want any future advance to be made at the expense of other provinces.

Major Attlee asked whether the original settlement was based on the fact that some provinces were richer and the others poorer or that some were backward and the others advanced. Mr. Wiles : Probably for all these reasons. Further examined, he said that the ideal of the Montford reforms was to make the provinces autonomous.

Major Attlee asked whether the conception of the Bombay government was that the wealthy provinces should pay taxes to the Central Government so that the poorer provinces might reach their standard.—Mr. Wiles was not authorised to give any opinion on behalf of the Bombay Government but he expressed his personal view that they would not stand in the way of others reaching a higher standard. But the Bombay Government did not want that its progress should stop so that others got up to its standard.

Replying to Lord Strathcona Mr. Wiles said that supertax was applied both to companies and individuals. There were no Death Duties at present, but the Government of India had under consideration a scheme of Succession Duties.

Mr. Wiles, replying to Mr. Ambedkar, said that there was competition between the Central and Provincial Governments in taxing country-made and foreign liquors.

Mr. Ambedkar asked whether the revenue proposed to be derived from the share

in incometax would meet normal expansion or provide for compulsory education and prohibition as well.

Mr. Wiles anticipated that it would meet the extra expenditure required.

Mr. Patel asked whether Bombay had not made progress in the nation-building departments because of the financial settlement.

Mr. Wiles : We have not as we should have liked to.

Replying to Mr. Abdul Latif who asked why the Bombay Government had suggested Central taxation as Death Duties, taxes on agricultural income, tobacco and excise duty, Mr. Wiles explained that the only hope of the Bombay Government lay in getting a share of the future surpluses of the Central Government. Therefore they had suggested sources of fresh revenue.

Sir John Simon remarked that this was quite the proper answer, for if they wanted to get anything it must be if fresh sources of revenue were tapped.

Mr. Patel suggested a system under which indirect taxes might be paid to the Central Government and direct taxes to the Provincial Governments.

Mr. Wiles said that it was a good ideal. Mr. Wiles also stated that the estimates regarding the growth of revenue in certain departments had been falsified.

Mr. Patel asked whether Mr. Wiles agreed with the view that Bombay was stagnant and actually going back in certain spheres and not progressing at all in others ?—Mr. Wiles said that he did not agree with that view. The explanation was that previously accumulated balances had helped the Bombay Government for a time, but for the last two years there had been no progress at all.

Sir H. S. Gour pointed out that the Provincial Councils had the power to impose taxes. Did they do that ? Mr. Wiles recited various measures of taxation imposed, such as the entertainment tax, the gambling tax and the raising of the stamp fee.

Sir H. S. Gour : What about a tax on succession ?

Mr. Wiles said that the question had been under consideration for six years and the Bombay Government even drew up an Inheritance Bill but at a meeting of provincial representatives it was unanimously decided that the administrative difficulties were so great that such an Act must be Central.

Sir H. S. Gour asked whether the Assembly, when it had rejected a bill on the subject, was likely to agree to such a measure. Mr. Wiles thought that the Succession Duties which they hoped to impose would not meet with much obstruction.

#### Mr. Cocke's Evidence

Mr. Cocke, President of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, was next called in for examination on the same question. He said that the Meston Settlement left them with growing heads of expenditure but gave to the Government of India the growing heads of revenue, leaving no elastic source of revenue, as land revenue in Bombay was not an expanding source. Sir John Simon asked how Mr. Cocke would explain that a large part of the provincial revenues was paid to the Central Government when provincial taxation in Bombay per head of population was higher than in the other provinces. Mr. Cocke said that he was referring to the town dwellers. Further examined, Mr. Cocke said that he was not asking for the grant to Bombay of any fixed sum, say Rs. 50 lakhs, but for a re-examination of the entire Meston Settlement by an independent Expert Committee.

Replying to Mr. Ambedkar Mr. Cocke agreed that excise revenue be transferred to the Central Government with a view to preventing unhealthy competition between the Central and Provincial Governments.

Sir Arthur Froom: Have there been adverse criticisms on your Chamber's memorandum after its publication ? Witness: None, it reflects the unanimous views of our community. The Conference then adjourned for the day.

POONA—19th OCTOBER 1928

#### Mr. Griffith's Evidence

#### TRANSFER OF POLICE TO MINISTER

On this day interesting evidence was tendered by Mr. Francis Charles Griffith, who recently handed over charge of the office of the Inspector-General of Police, Bombay, and was sailing home by the week-end.

Special importance attached to his evidence, as well as that of the Home Secretary of the Bombay Government in view of the fact that the local Government had recommended, it was believed, transfer of all subjects including "Police" to popular control, subject to certain conditions.

Examined by Sir John Simon, Mr. Griffith said that he had seen thirty-years' service in the Police Department of Bombay, had been Commissioner of Police of Bombay, and had been since the last eight years, Inspector-General of Police of the whole presidency.

Replying to Col. Lane Fox, the witness said that the Police force consisted of armed and unarmed men, divided into three divisions.

Sir John Simon : What about Sind ? Whether it is to be separated or not, you always seem to count it outside the presidency proper. (Laughter.)—The witness said that including Sind there were four divisions. He explained the organisation of the force and added that it included five Indian promoted Superintendents of Police.

Col. Lane-Fox asked whether there would be great difficulty in the way of a Minister if any trouble that arose concerned his own particular class. The witness agreed that there would be.

Questioned about allegations of corruption against the police the witness replied that these presupposed that there must be a giver and a receiver of a bribe. In modern times people had begun to resist the pressure of the police.

Mr. Bhuto : Does this improvement also apply to mofussil area—Yes. Corruption is far less, even in Sind.

Dr. Suhrawardy : You think it is due both to a change in the people's outlook and moral improvement among the policemen ?—Both.

Further examined by Col. Lane-Fox the witness traced to communal feelings the strain imposed on the Police force

Sir John Simon : Do you think communal tension has been diminished or increased by the Montford Reforms ?—I won't attribute it to the reforms ?

Sir John Simon : I am glad you put it that way. In your view the burden of keeping law and order owing to the communal strain has increased during the past ten years ?—It is on the whole an increasing burden due either to Brahmin and Non-Brahmin or Hindu-Moslem tension.

Sir John Simon pointed out that in the Punjab, though the "Religious Endowments" was a Transferred subject, the serious situation caused by the Sikh agitation had to be dealt with, so that the situation to be dealt with by the police might arise just as much in the Transferred as in the Reserved field. The witness said that was so. The witness also informed the Chairman that there was always the assistance of the military at hand. In case of an emergency a police superintendent could ask for help without any order from above, but must keep the member in charge informed of his action. In Bombay, in 1928, labour troubles required the assistance of the military.

Sir John Simon : What about other districts, say, in a place like Poona ?—The witness said that trouble had not so far arisen during the last eight years, but if it did the military would first be warned, then removed to some central situation and finally called out and they would act in collaboration with the Police.

The Chairman asked the witness if there was intensive communal trouble and if a police officer himself belonged to one or other community, did the public in such case show a desire that such situation should be handled by an Englishman.

The witness : Most certainly, Sir. This was our experience recently when the local Hindus wanted the Moslem police officer to be withdrawn from "Godhra."

Mr. Shah Nawaz asked whether there had been complaints of partiality against European police officials as well. Mr. Griffith replied that such complaints had been received.

Mr. Shah further asked whether Indian officers had been found quite capable. The witness said they had been. At present there were five Indian police superintendents, of whom two were Moslems, one Parsee and two Christians.

Major Attlee asked whether the policeman was regarded with suspicion or whether the Indian people had the same feelings towards them as in England. The witness said that the feeling was not the same.

Sir John Simon : You mean individually. We, in England, have more friendly feeling towards the policeman. We call him "Bobby." Mr. Griffith : That is so.

Major Attlee ; Here the people consider them a necessary evil (Laughter).

Mr. Griffith : But if you remove the policeman the people want him back.

The witness informed Lord Strathcona that in the matter of calling out military aid the police superintendent was the arbiter. He had not to consult the higher authorities. Sir John Simon remarked that probably the point to remember was that at present both the police and military were Reserved subjects and that the situation would be different where a police superintendent was under a popular Minister and the military under Reserved control.

Lord Burnham, referring to the question of separation of judicial from executive functions, asked whether from the experience of the witness and the practical working of the system there was anything to give greater points to-day to those who advocated separation than it was forty years ago when the Congress raised the point.

The witness replied that there was no change.

Lord Burnham said the witness spoke of suspicion in communal cases against a police superintendent belonging to one community. Would this apply to a District Magistrate as well ? The witness said that undoubtedly it would.

Viscount Burnham : Has such a case occurred in your experience ?

Mr. Griffith : Fortunately, the districts in charge of the Indian officials had not had such troubles to face.

Sir Zulfikar Ali Khan said there had been cases where applications had been made for transfer of judicial proceedings from the magistrate because he belonged to a particular community. The witness said that it was so.

Mr. Patil asked whether the witness could foresee when such transfer would be possible or would they have to wait till doomsday ? Mr. Griffith : I cannot prophesy.

Sir John Simon : You are giving a personal opinion ?

Mr. Griffith : If the British Parliament decided to grant provincial autonomy, would you suggest any constitutional safeguards regarding the police force ?

Sir John Simon said that they could not expect a police officer to suggest constitutional safe-guards, which subject could be dealt with only by the Home Department.

Further examined by Mr. Patil and Sir H. S. Gour, Mr. Griffith made it clear that his objection to transfer of Law and Order was not racial at all. He would not object to its being in charge of an Indian Member on the Reserved side, but merely objected to its transfer to a Minister responsible to an electorate, who was likely for that reason to sacrifice a police official.

Sir Arthur Froom asked whether this was also the opinion of other police officials. The witness replied that this was the feeling of the entire police force.

Sir Arthur Froom : You particularly object to the transfer of C. I. D. work. The witness replied in the affirmative and added that a division of the police between the Transferred and Reserved Departments would not conduce to efficiency.

Mr. Ambedkar elicited the information that a member of the depressed classes had been recruited for training at the Nasik School, but there were great practical difficulties in the way of recruiting this class for the police.

Mr. Ambedkar suggested that at present policemen or headmen in villages were hereditary or belonged to a particular locality and therefore suppressed crime relating to their own class or community. The witness agreed.

Sir John Simon here remarked that on October 17 during their visit to a village (when they were accompanied by Mr. Patil and Mr. Latiff, members of the Bombay Committee) they had an opportunity of meeting the headman of the village.

Mr. Ambedkar suggested that following the system established in the new States of Europe a police officer should always belong to a minority community. The witness replied then all would be either Moslems or Parsees and this would not lead to efficiency.

Sir Hari Singh Gour asked whether the opinion of the witness was that recruitment from the depressed classes would diminish police efficiency and increase the hostility of the general mass of the people to the police, that fitness must be the sole test for recruitment, and that selection from minorities only would lead to great discontent among the majority community against the police force.

The witness agreed with these views.

Mr. Abdul Latiff asked whether the present police force was sufficient to maintain law and order. The witness replied that it was.

Mr. Latiff : Does the C. I. D. inspire confidence among the people ?

Mr. Griffith : All I can say is that for every hundred requests for the assistance of the C. I. D. we are only able to satisfy one. That goes to prove the opposite.

Mr. Shah asked whether the suspicion that now prevailed against officers of one community by another was not a transitory phase. The witness thought it was so.

Mr. Shah : You must have Indian officers enjoying the confidence of both communities ?—Yes.

There have been complaints of partiality against European officials as well ?—Yes.

Indian officers have been found capable of controlling their areas ?—Yes.

Have you in the past few years increased your higher posts and retrenched the lower ranks ?—No. When we were pressed to economise we reduced, say, 200 unarmed men in the districts and replaced them by 50 armed men in our bludgeon section. The force was thereby made more efficient, but the investigation staff has decreased.

Sir Hari Singh Gour suggested that the communal tension caused recently had a political basis behind it and the disturbances were not purely religious. The witness was heard to say that they were political demonstrations on a religious basis, but later examined by Dr. Suhrawardy he expressed the view that the communal system of representation and the scramble for offices was not the cause of communal disturbances.

Sir H. S. Gour asked the opinion of the witness regarding the co-operation of the civil population with the police, and suggested the establishment of Civic Guards. The witness said it was difficult to say how that would work.

Sir H. S. Gour : Do you expect you will be more successful in securing detection of crime if you enlisted members of the minority community in your force to keep a check on the majority community ?—It would be disastrous to the efficiency of the force.

As regards preventive action most of the reported crime goes unpunished. Can you suggest any improvement ?—We want more money to increase our investigation and detection staff, to train the men better and cut out the Law's delays. At present political crime and traffic duties paralyse normal police and crime work.

You agree that the growth of communalism destroys the efficiency of the force and increases your burdens ?—Yes.

Do you see any objection why a police superintendent should not have the powers now possessed by a District Magistrate in police matters and should act independently ?—Personally no objection at all.

It would be quite satisfactory for the preservation of law and order to make him responsible for detection of crime in this district ?—Yes.

Mr. Griffith, examined by Sir Arthur Froom, said that the efficiency of the police to-day was higher but its effect less.

Dr. Suhrawardy asked whether it was not a fact that the period of the Reforms roughly corresponded to the period of the activities of the apostles of the non-violent Non-cooperation movement and the preachers of the Khilafat going about disturbing the "pathetic contentment" of the people ?—The witness agreed that it was so. There was Hindu-Moslem entente at first which was followed by a swing of the pendulum.

Dr. Suhrawardy asked whether the reduction in police corruption was due to the growth of public opinion as well as improvement in the morals of the police ?—The witness thought it was due to both.

Questioned by Sir Zulfikarali Khan, who suggested that minorities were at the mercy of the majority community, the witness agreed that this was so to a great extent, but protection was provided when there was trouble by the police undertaking picketting duties.

Sardar Shivdev Singh Uberoi criticised the lack of progress of Indianisation in the Bombay force, which did not come up to the Lee ratio and would delay the half and half proportion to 40 years instead of 25.—Mr. Griffith replied that recently his proposal for the recruitment of one European and one Indian, though supported

by the Bombay Government, was not accepted by the Government of India, who said the proportion in the service was for all India.

Sir John Simon said then this was a matter for investigation at the headquarters of the Government of India. Some provinces thus were having more than their percentage and others less.

Mr. Rajah and Raja Nawabali asked whether the objection of the witness to the transfer of Law and Order was merely based on apprehension or on personal experience.—The witness said that it was based on apprehension.

#### WORKING OF FOREST.

The witness then withdrew and the Conference adjourned to meet again in the afternoon when it examined Mr. Newman, Chief Conservator of Forests, Bombay.

Questioned by Lord Strathcona whether the transfer of "Forests" to popular control in the Bombay Presidency had been successful, the witness said it was difficult to answer the question. The forest service had proceeded just as successfully on the whole as before, but at present it still contained a very large element of Europeans, but there was apprehension concerning the future as the average Indian was not suitable for the forest service. The Bombay Council had given them the funds they wanted and the resources of the forests were being exploited to the utmost extent.

Examined by Sir John Simon, the witness agreed that his anxiety was due not to the transfer of "Forests" to the Ministers, but due only to Indianisation, because no European was likely to join the service in future.

Further examined, Mr. Newman said that he was not advocating a retransfer of "Forests" to the Reserved side, nor did he hold that Indians were not at all capable of holding charge of forests, but suggested that the interests of the service required a mixture both of Indians and Europeans in the proportion of 50 and 50. He thought everytime a Moslem made a better forest officer than others.

#### POONA—22nd OCTOBER 1928

Sardar Mutalik was examined by the Simon "Joint Free Conference" on this day on behalf of the Inamdars' Association of Bombay.

Replying to Sir John Simon, Sardar Mutalik stated that the basis of their claim for special representation was their great influence in this presidency and the fact that they would be able to exercise a steady influence upon the decisions of the legislatures. Their complaint was not only that they had inadequate representation but that distribution of seats in the presidency had been wrongly done.

Questioned by Mr. Cadogan regarding the proposal for a second chamber, Sardar Mutalik said that he was not opposed to it on principle but their suggestion for increase of special representation would give the popular chamber a combined function obviating the need for a second chamber; otherwise he had no objection to a second chamber. Replying to questions regarding the exact position of the members of the association which the population represented Sardar Mutalik said that the association consisted of Sardars who were mostly landlords. All of them were not landlords but paid the usual taxes. Inamdars, however, hold lands free from income-tax on agricultural income, and paid one-fourth of the normal revenue but were subject to succession duties.

Major Attlee declared that Inamdars compared with other owners of land got off lightly. Therefore, on the principle that representation should be based on taxation the Inamdars might be said to be not entitled to special privileges for representation.

The witness did not accept the view that they were lightly taxed.

Major Attlee: What do your class of landlords do with their tenants?

Witness: One by one our powers of doing good to the tenants are being taken away by the Government.

Q: On what do you base your claim for special representation? Witness: On influence in society. Q: Then, you should get elected from the general constituency? Witness: There is a prejudice against us.

Sir H. S. Gour: What is this prejudice due to?

A: They think we are Government, and want to deprive us of our inam lands.



Sir John Simon : Are there no Inamdars elected from the general constituency ?

Witness : There are, but they came on the communal ticket.

Sir John Simon : Well, that is another trouble.

Col. Lane Fox, himself a landowner, wished to know how Government prevented their good work for the tenants. Sardar Mutalik explained that they received land revenue as settled by the Government and through Government agency.

Replying to Lor-l Strathcona, witness said that their main grievance was that representation in the Council remained unchanged since 1861, though the constitution of the Council changed in 1892, 1909 and 1920.

Dr Ambedkar : The association is opposed to lowering of the franchise. How then can they get representation for the tenant class ?

Witness replied that tenants were in a better position and were well represented by the members returned by the general constituencies.

Q : How are they in a better position ?

Sir John Simon : We have got an answer, and must not persuade people to accept another view.

Dr Ambedkar asked how the witness was justified in stating that the depressed classes were not suffering from political disability. Sardar Mutalik replied that those possessing qualifications must be taken in the Government service. If that was not done, it was against the spirit of the Queen's Proclamation.

Mr. Abdul Latiff asked whether it was no a fact that Sardars and Inamdars were men of decaying fortune, who supplemented their income by other earnings.

Witness agreed.

Mr. Patil : You stand for both democracy and aristocracy, because while advocating the abolition of communal representation, you urge representation for yourself ?

Witness : Communal representation is different from class representation. We advocate the latter for special interests, not only landholding and aristocratic, but also for university, commerce, labour and industry.

Mr. Patil : You have among you all classes, Brahmins, Non-Brahmins, Parsees, Christians and depressed classes as members of the association. If you get another seat, would you reserve one seat for Non-Brahmins ?

Witness : We are opposed to communal sub-division among ourselves.

Mr. Patil : You ask that provincial autonomy be granted subject to the provision that your inams and sannad rights be not disturbed without your consent. Why then do you want special representation at all ?

Sardar Mutalik : We want to contribute to the national good by exercising a steady influence in the deliberations of the legislatures.

Q. Are you willing to transfer all powers exercised by the present Government to its successor ?

A : Not for a time, but even at present the Government cannot impair our rights.

Mr. Patil : Do you think the backward classes have sufficient representation in proportion to their enfranchised number and population ?

Witness : They have sufficient representation.

Mr. Miran Shah : What do you call effective representation for your class ?

Witness : About one-tenth of the members of the local Council.

Q : But your association, having a minority of Mahomedans, would not elect a Muslim representative. Witness : We select the best man irrespective of the community to which he belongs.

Mr. Suhrawardy : Has ever a Muslim been elected by you since 1881 ?—No

Mr. Miran Shah : You recommend separation of Sind and though opposed to communal representation you advocate special seats for the Hindu minority ?

Witness : That is only for the transitional period, say, for the first two elections.

Sardar Mazumdar asked whether it was not a fact that no other class paid succession duties ? Witness : No other class pays the duties.

Q : Landlords have least representation in Bombay compared with other major provinces ? Witness : Yes.

Q : You pay local cess, and yet you have been deprived of seats on local boards ?

Major Attlee : But you can recover this cess from tenants ?

Witness : In some cases tenants do not pay.

Sir Sankaran Nair, after examining the system of payment for services rendered by the labourer in the field, asked whether they would agree to Government fixing a certain share by legislation for labourers in the fields.

Witness opposed any legislative interference.

Sir H. S. Gour : You pay succession duty because you have a privileged tenure ?

Sirdar Mutalik : No. This tax is a later growth.

Q : What good you have been deprived of which you wish to do to the tenants ?

A : We shall work for village sanitation and for agricultural improvement.

Dr. Gour : You say, you favour a democratic form of government, and would bestow autonomy on the legislature, and yet you will restrict that autonomy by restricting their power of legislation regarding your Inams.

Witness : Such restriction exists even in the case of British Parliament.

Sir John Simon asked the witness to restrict himself to his sphere and not to speak of the limitations of the British Parliament (Laughter.)

Sir H. S. Gour. What representation would you advocate for your class ?

Witness : About ten per cent for our association, but the total representation for the property holders should be about thirty per cent.

Sir H. S. Gour asked how the witness reconciled provincial autonomy on the British Cabinet system with a Governor presiding over the Cabinet, and how the Governor could choose landlord Ministers.

Witness replied that if the choice was between two equally balanced groups, preference should be shown to land-holding leaders.

Replying to Dr. Suhrawardy, the witness admitted that no Muslim had been returned by their association since 1892, and that their deputation to-day included no Muslim, Parsee or Non-Brahmin.

Examined by Mr. Rajah, the witness stated that there were two depressed class men in their constituency.

Mr. Rajah wanted to know whether civic disabilities existed against the depressed classes or not. The witness replied that they were disappearing.

Sardar Shivdev Singh Uberoi asked why the deputation's memorandum declared that the Council of State was unpopular.

Sardar Mutalik replied that it was because it threw out some legislation sent up by the Assembly. He wanted the Council of State to be reconstituted with representation for the landholding and commercial classes and the University graduates.

Sardar Uberoi suggested that the Council of State was however representative of those classes.

#### Muslim Federation's Evidence.

After lunch Kazi Kabiruddin Nawab, Sardar Ahmed Ali Khan, and Nawab Syed Ali Khan, gave evidence on behalf of the All-India Muslim Federation.

Replying to Sir John Simon, they put forward the following general propositions. Firstly safeguards for minorities, particularly for Mahomedans, should be provided in the constitution itself. The safeguards should be separate electorates in all elective bodies, proper representation in the services and on the governing bodies of universities and educational institutions, recognition of the Urdu language, non-interference with religious observances, and representation of minorities in the Provincial Cabinets.

Sir John Simon asked, from the practical point of view of drafting, whether all these provisions should be included in the Government of India Act.—Kazi Kabiruddin replied that some general provision of this character was necessary.

Questioned regarding the working of the general electorate in Bombay City, witness told Sir John Simon that Mahomedans did not get fair representation.

Mr. Abdul Latiff suggested that in the case of common electorates, Mahomedans should depend on the goodwill of Hindu voters.

Witness replied that common electorates would destroy Mahomedan identity, and would make them submit to the wishes of Hindu voters. For instance, some Mahomedans in the Bombay Corporation voted with the Hindus for restriction of cow-slaughter in Bombay.

Q : Is communal tension due to separate electorates ? A : No. These existed

several years before the tension arose. Q : Is it due to jealousy for political power among leaders? A : It appears to be so.

Q : Is it a fact that the main body of Hindus wish to abolish communal representation, because then alone they are likely to get control of Government?

Witness : I do not know whether that is their object, but that would be the result.

Replying to Mr. Patil, Kazi Kabiruddin agreed that Non-Brahmins and backward classes should have special representation on the elective bodies and in services. Further, his view was that the various minorities should have such representation as would enable them together to outvote the majority.

Mr. Patil asked whether under a joint electorate with reservation of seats, Mahomedans would not be equally well off as reservation of seats would give them security. Witness feared that the real representatives of the community would not be returned.

Mr. Miran Shah : Do you consider separate electorate necessary for ever? Witness : Only for the present till the national outlook grows.

Q : You want the status quo to be maintained in the Bombay Council?

Witness : No. As the official and nominated blocs are to be removed, we should have some share from those seats.

Witness agreed with Dr. Ambedkar that the franchise should be lowered to bring in a large number of interests and that the strength of the Council should be increased for the purpose.

Dr. Ambedkar asked why the witness was advocating communal representation when in the same breath he was asking that fundamental rights should be safeguarded by the constitution. If the latter happened, the need for the former would not exist. Kazi Kabiruddin replied that supposing that the majority brought in a resolution of a seditious or objectionable character against the Government, the Mahomedans would defeat it.

Replying to Sir H. S. Gour witness said that the Muslim Federation was for a federal system of Government with full provincial autonomy and the abolition of the office of Secretary of State and the India Council.

Sir H. S. Gour : It follows, the central Government must also be autonomous? Witness : Yes, it should be.

Lord Burnham : Are you in this case representing the view of the Federation? Witness : The view of the Federation is contained in the memorandum. Whatever I state outside it is my view.

Sir H. S. Gour : You want the rights of the minorities to be adequately safeguarded? Everything else is a matter of method?

Witness : I want that minorities should be safeguarded by the constitution, and not left in the hands of the central legislature where the Mahomedans would always be in a minority.

Asked to explain the history of the Federation, Kazi Kabiruddin said, the Federation was organised about a year ago, because the old Muslim League split into two on the question of separate or joint electorates. and one part was captured by the extremist Muslims. The Federation had now a membership of 500 all over India.

Sir H. S. Gour : What is the membership of the Muslim League?

A : It has practically gone to pieces.

Q : Do you realise that your proposals would amount to communal partition of India? Witness : Mahomedans want to see the country progress.

Sir Aurther Froom : You want provincial autonomy. but are you equally emphatic about responsibility in the Central Government? Witness : About the Central Government the Federation are a little doubtful.

Sir Arthur Froom : Would you agree that Law and Order should be handed over to a Minister?

Witness : In my opinion, it would be desirable not to transfer Law and Order.

Nawab Zulfikar Ali Khan : In your opinion, there would be greater friction between the two communities if general electorates are adopted and separate electorates are the only remedy?

Witness : It is the best remedy if not the only remedy.

Q : You think in spite of the hopeless Muslim minority in the central Legislature, still the Central Government can be made responsible to the electorates ?

A : There should be one or two Mahomedan Ministers in the Central Cabinet, and the majority community itself would be divided between the Depressed Classes and the Non-Brahmins.

Q : But in spite of these, Mahomedans would be in an embarrassing position.

A : Then responsibility in the centre should not be given at least for some time.

Q : You know, Mr. Jinnah has gone back on his Delhi proposals ?

A : So it is said

Dr. Suhrawardy mentioned the list of safeguards and pointed out that in Bengal, the Dacca University Act provided special representation for Muslim graduates and executive instructions were issued regarding Muslim representation in certain educational bodies. Why then want constitutional safeguards for these ? Witness : The Bombay Muslims are not so fortunately placed.

Sir John Simon : In Bengal, they are 54 per cent, and in Bombay 19 per cent.

Dr. Suhrawardy pointed out that during the Minto-Morley Reforms, no Muslim was elected from the General Constituency, though it could have been done. Witness said that it was so.

Dr. Suhrawardy : You are opposed to joint electorates, as you won't get competent members of the community returned ? Witness : That is so.

#### MR. BOLE EXAMINED.

M. Bole, nominated member for Labour in the Bombay Council and Mr. Surve, Advocate who represented Mahratta and allied castes in the first two Councils were next examined.

Mr. Bole advocated universal suffrage as a solution of the difficulties regarding communal and special representation, but as this might not be concluded, he proposed that nomination should be confined solely to five Labour members and seven Agricultural population representatives, while seats should be reserved for the backward classes and special electorates set up for the Depressed Classes.

Mr. Surve was against universal franchise and wanted the present franchise to be halved. He wished representation to be reserved for non-maharattas.

Mr. Patil suggested that Mahrattas and non-Mahrattas could settle their differences, and should be satisfied if seats were reserved for the backward classes.

Mr. Bole was asked whether if universal franchise was introduced, the labour would be exploited by designing people. Witness : He may take advantage of it.

Sir H. S. Gour : Bolsheviks recently were at the bottom of the mill strike ?

Witness did not agree.

Sir H. S. Gour : They at any rate prolonged the strike ?

Lord Burnham who was presiding owing to Sir John Simon having left on some business, intervening said, Dr. Gour's question was of a wider character.

Replying to Mr. Hartshorn, Mr. Bole said he was a member of the Bombay Textile Workers' Union which consisted of 6,000 members. His views were personal, but thought these would appeal to the Union. The Commission then adjourned.

POONA—23 OCTOBER 1928.

The Joint Free Conference reassembled on this day to hear the evidence on behalf of the depressed classes in the morning, and to examine the Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court in the afternoon.

Dr. Ambedkar took his seat in the witness box and in the course of examination urged that the depressed classes should be classified as a distinct community, entirely different from the Hindus. He suggested that parts should be reserved for them in the legislatures, and that the present practice of nominating one or two members should cease to exist. The depressed classes should have at least 22 out of 140 seats in the Bombay Legislative Council.

According to Dr. Ambedkar, there has been little or no change during the last 20 years in the treatment accorded to the depressed classes in the country. He told Mr. Rajah that the attitude of members of the Bombay Council towards the untouchables was not favourable. He refused to admit that the depressed classes, on account of their illiteracy, were less intelligent than the other communities.

Dr. Ambedkar, examined along with Mr. Solonaki, by Sir John Simon, as regards the numerical strength of the depressed classes in the Bombay Presidency, said : "It is a very large number of people who deserve our very special consideration. Probably if you apply a narrow test, they are about one and a half million ; with a broader test, they are two or three millions.

Sir Hari Singh Gour : Do you regard 'depressed classes' and untouchables' as synonymous terms. Do you confine yourself to untouchables, as the aborigines and the criminal tribes are not untouchables ? Witness : There are certain classes among them also, who are untouchables, but you cannot judge the position correctly as they do not come into contact with the society.

Sir Hari Singh Gour : What about the class of semi-untouchables ?

Witness : There is no such class.

Sir John Simon : We are primarily engaged in constitutional inquiry, and need not go into these social customs because whatever the Commission may do these conditions are not likely to be improved suddenly. We confine ourselves to the classes who are untouchables only. Would you tell us the proper way in which the Constitution of India should be amended ?

Witness : We claim that we must be treated as a distinct minority separate from the Hindu community. There is really no link between Hindus and the depressed classes. Therefore we must be regarded as a distinct and independent community. We deserve far greater political protection than any other minority in India because of our educational backwardness, and economic and social barriers. We claim reservation on the same basis as the Mahomedan minority. We claim reserve seats if accompanied by adult suffrage ; but in the absence of adult suffrage we want separate electorates.

Dr. Ambedkar further stated that he would like certain safeguards in the Constitution itself or Instrument of Advice to the Governor regarding the education of the depressed classes and their entry into the public services

Sir John Simon : You claim that the depressed classes, though included in Hinduism, should be regarded, from the point of view of the Constitution, as a distinct and separate community, and that your interests will be satisfactorily represented by the higher caste Hindus ? Witness : That is one ground ; but we cannot be considered part of the Hindu community."

Sir John Simon : You come from the earlier inhabitants of this country ?

Witness : That is one view I think.

Sir John Simon : There are some very distinguished Hindu public men who have exhibited a good deal of interest in the cause of the depressed classes. There is no question about that ? Witness : There is great platform talk, but no action.

Sir John Simon : So you want to be regarded as a distinct community, and adult suffrage and abandonment of nomination, and its substitution by election. That is would require a voters' list. What about the percentage of literacy among the depressed classes ? Witness : It is very small.

Further examined by the Chairman, witness said he wanted 22 seats reserved out of 140 seats, in case of adult suffrage, and would require the same number of seats through separate electorates in the Bombay Council if adult suffrage was not granted. Dr. Ambedkar gave instances of alleged ill-treatment of members of the depressed classes by caste Hindus. He mentioned the case of an untouchable who was afraid to enter a court room because he feared that the higher castes would ostracise him.

Sir John Simon . What would they have done had he entered ?

Witness : They would refuse to sell him any food or grain, and would not allow him to enter the village. The fact that High Court issued a circular permitting the depressed classes to go into the court room, shows that there must be some reason for it.

Mr. Miller asked whether there were 22 men among the depressed classes qualified to be members of the Bombay Council? Witness : Yes, there are.

Mr. Abdul Latiff : You think that, if the official block is withdrawn, as it is certain to be sooner or later, the position of the minorities would be weak?

Witness : It would be very precarious.

Mr. Abdul Latiff : Did not the Hindus of Sholapur ask the depressed classes to help them to crush Mahomedans? Witness : Yes, overtures were made, and my advice was sought. I advised them to keep aloof.

Mr. Patil : Are Bhangis included among you? Witness : No, but they should be.

Mr. Patil : Within your backward classes there are certain minorities?

Sir John Simon : We are considering the case of untouchables.

Mr. Patil. There are various minorities among the minority classes.

Sir John Simon : I admit India is full of minorities, but this morning we are considering the case of people who are known as the depressed classes.

Mr. Miran Shah : Would you accept the view that the representation of minorities, whether Moslems or depressed classes, should be proportionate to the population? Witness : No, that will reduce us to perpetual subjection.

Would you be content with local board franchise?—A : I want adult suffrage. In any case the lower the franchise, the better.

You will probably suggest nomination for criminal tribes' representatives rather than election?—I do not mind election or nomination, but their interests should be protected. I do not agree that their literacy is a test of intelligence. Every man is intelligent and understands his interests in exercising his vote.

Have separate electorates led to communal tension?—If they have we cannot help, but we cannot get rid of them. There is no doubt as a result of communal representation the leaders are less prone to make compromises than otherwise, but I don't think communal representation is the root cause of the riots.

Sir John Simon : Let us not go into the question of communalism this morning.

Major Attlee pointed out that the depressed classes were also labourers. Then how would the witness get over the difficulty of their being voters both as labourers and as depressed class s men. Dr. Ambedkar said that almost all depressed classes men were labourers but in the textile industry, for instance, they were engaged exclusively in certain departments. They were not admitted into the weaving department.

Major Attlee : They are members of trade unions?—Yes, depressed classes men would also represent labourers.

Mr. Hartshorn asked whether the witness had worked out the figures regarding the difference it would make in the voting strength of adult suffrage compared with the existing local boards franchise.

The witness said he was himself shaky on the point. The present local boards franchise did produce a certain number of depressed class voters.

Questioned regarding the cause of the exclusion of depressed class men from certain textile departments, the witness said that during the strike the labour union was persuaded to recognise their claim and put this forward as a grievance but the employers snubbed them as it was no fault of the employers.

Mr. Hartshorn : Is it due to the fact that the employers want cheap labour, or whether the employees feared they might depress the wages in other departments.

The witness replied that the sole reason was untouchability.

Mr. Kikabhai Premchand said that according to the witness the lower the standing of a voter the greater would be his electoral advantage. If every minority was thus to have excessive representation, where would the majority be? The witness replied that the division then would be between capitalists and labourers. There would be other similar divisions. Men from the communities could join.

Mr. Kikabhai : Is it true that the people not politically minded are led astray, frequently by professional leaders?—I am a professional leader myself and can't say.

The vote is liable to abuse?—I don't think so

Why do you want the education of the depressed classes to be a charge on the provincial revenue?—You ask those who refuse it.

Mr. Kikabhai stated that the Bombay Municipality, for instance, had opened all its schools to boys of the depressed classes.—The witness replied that there

was also recently a demonstration presided over by Sir Manmohandas Ramji against it in Bombay.

Mr. Kikabhai : The depressed classes are engaged in the weaving department of textile units ?—It must be exclusively so.

Sir John Simon : Then the difficulty is the mixture.

Sir H. S. Gour : What are your views on constitutional reforms ?—We as a sabha are more interested in obtaining guarantees under whatever form of government we live. Personally we would favour provincial autonomy, but would wish some safeguards in respect of law and order, though opposed to its transfer. In the Central Government they might introduce dyarchy.

Sir H. S. Gour : Have they attained the degree of political consciousness to use the weapon to their advantage ?—I emphatically maintain that the depressed classes would exercise the vote in an intelligent manner.

Do you think those who pay no taxes and having political power will tax those who are already heavily taxed ?—That should be so.

Is that your feeling or also the feeling of your institute ?—Mine, but it reflects the general opinion of the institute.

Sir H. S. Gour asked whether the witness would describe the depressed classes as non-Hindus for electoral purposes if he wanted them to become a distinct community.—The witness said that the matter was of no concern so long as they were outside the pale of Hinduism.

Sir John Simon : What about the extent to which pollution occurred by the touch or shadow of the depressed classes ?—There is undoubtedly an improvement in that direction.

Sir John Simon : Compared with 20 years ago there are some men of your community who have risen professionally ?—Yes, but I am only a practitioner in Bombay.

The witness next stated that in a great many places people of the depressed classes were not taken in motor cars which ran for hire on account of their alleged untouchability.

Sir John Simon : I suppose some of them go in the city trams ?—Two years ago a bhangi ( sweeper ) was not allowed to board a tram.

Sir John Simon : The fact you speak of was two years ago which shows that the case must be exceptional.

Sir H. S. Gour : Are you sure he was properly attired ?—The trouble was his untouchability.

Mr. M. C. Rajah : You were attired in this dress when a barber refused to shave you ? Witness : Yes, I was. (Laughter.)

Sir H. S. Gour pointed out that Mrs. Ambalal Seth had started a depressed classes institution in Ahmedabad and was maintaining it. The witness said that was an honourable exception.

Sir John Simon : I understand it is an exceptional case and not a specimen of what happens everywhere.

Dr. Suhrawardy said if Dr. Ambedkar's client was so frightened as not to enter a court-room, much less would he join the common polling booth along with high-caste voters. They would have to provide separate electorates ?—Witness agreed.

Mr. Rajah asked about medical relief.—The witness replied that in the mofussil dispensaries the doctors, as they belonged to the high castes, dispensed medicines outside the room. Dr. Sloniki added that he knew of a case in Gujerat where a depressed class man died for want of medical relief, due to caste prejudices.

Sir John Simon : Of course in this case the objection taken by the medical man was due to his own religious views.

Lord Burnham : If you get neither adult suffrage nor separate electorates, have you any other proposal to make ?—I must have either.

Sir John Simon : You are in favour of election. Are you satisfied that it would result in the return of really best specimens of the depressed classes ? I ask this because the Moslems have expressed a different view.—I think adult suffrage will counter the balance of any mischief.

Replying to Sardar Mazumdar the witness admitted there were different castes among the depressed classes, for instance, Mahars and Maungs did not inter-

marry, but added that now-a-days a movement for consolidation of the depressed classes was going on and inter-marriages were taking place.

This concluded the recording of public evidence of the day. After lunch the Conference examined the Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court in camera and then adjourned. There was no sitting on the next day.

POONA—25th & 27th OCTOBER 1928.

Before the Simon Joint Free Conference to-day Messrs. N. E. Nawale and K. S. Gupta were examined on behalf of the Non-Brahmin party.

Replying to Sir John Simon the witnesses stated that Mr. B. V. Jadhav, Minister of the Bombay Government was a member of their party.

Sir John Simon said that he understood that at present 13 out of 100 adult males had the vote and one female in 200, and further that the qualification for franchise in urban areas was different from that in rural areas. What were the suggestions of the witnesses in this direction?

Mr. Nawale replied that they stood for adult franchise as the ultimate goal, but wanted at present only considerable increase in the number of voters by reducing to half the existing qualification for the rural voter. The result of this in his district of Ahmednagar, for instance, would be an increase in the number of voters from 17,000 to 26,000.

As regards urban areas he would have the qualification in Bombay City only so that everyone who paid five rupees as monthly rent became a voter. This was suggested in order to enfranchise the millhands.

Speaking about rural areas the witness told Sir John Simon that it was more commonly the case that the cultivator was also the owner of the land he cultivated, and was not always simply a tenant.

Sir John Simon pointed out that the suggestion of the Non-Brahmin Party would amount to abolishing general electorates altogether. That would be a big change.—The witness said it would be so, but the Brahmins were dominating everywhere at present.

But this demand might be followed by a demand for a list of different castes among Non-Brahmins?—On the whole the Non-Brahmins are making a united demand.

Major Atlee pointed out that as the Non-Brahmins were the majority of the voters and had returned fourteen members to the Bombay Legislative Council against only seven seats reserved for them, they had no ground to fear the existence of general constituencies.—Mr. Nawale replied that Brahmins exercised considerable influence over ignorant voters both because of priestly dominance and on account of their official position. Money-lenders were also under the influence of Brahmins.

Sir John Simon: You mean you would not have been elected but for your seats having been reserved?—That is so. The constituencies which have returned Non-Brahmins are enlightened and a great deal depends on the personality of the man.

Major Atlee pointed out that the proposal of the witnesses would enfranchise only 26,000 out of 700,000 of the population. The witness replied that the lower the franchise the more acceptable would it be to him. He thought the time for abolishing reserved seats would be ten years hence.

Sir John Simon: You take the view that the adoption of reserved seats tends to create a situation in which reserved seats would not be necessary?—There would be no necessity.

Colonel Lane Fox suggested that the startling proposal of the witness which was undemocratic required some further justification because a Non-Brahmin voter need not tell a Brahmin candidate which side he had voted and the question of Brahmin influence could thereby be got over.—The witness held that secrecy of the ballot could not be kept because of the voters' ignorance.

Mr. Patil suggested that in case Non-Brahmins secured a satisfactory representation according to the population basis then they should have reserved seats and let Brahmins as well vote for them.—The witness agreed



with the proposal and also was in favour of dividing the country between rural and urban constituencies on the lines obtaining in the Central Provinces. He wanted three rural seats or every single urban seat. At present the urban candidate had no easy time of it during elections while the rural candidate had to undergo considerable trouble. The witness told Mr. Shah that the Mahratta and allied castes had joined them on the question.

Sir H. S. Gour asked whether the witness had realised the effect on the constitution of the Council if the suggestions of the witness were accepted. Would he not try to get the best brains?—I am opposed to getting the best brains alone. I want for the masses direct representation. We have had enough of Brahmin domination.

Sir H. S. Gour: You would sacrifice the best brains for class representation?—I would.

Sir H. S. Gour suggested that literacy be made an electoral qualification so that any one who had read up to the fourth primary standard could vote, which would encourage the growth of literacy.—The witness did not agree and wished the property and rent qualification to be lowered.

Sir H. S. Gour next remarked that the witness feared the influence of Brahmins on the voters, but if this were so Brahmins could put up undesirable Non-Brahmin candidates and make them succeed.—Mr. Nawale replied that this would be the lesser evil and as the voters' intelligence grew the evil would disappear.

Dr. Suhrawardy asked, supposing the Non-Brahmins were assured of separate electorates and adequate representation on a population basis, whether they would still ask for a lowering of the franchise, especially as the larger the number of ignorant voters the greater would be the influence of the priests.

The witness did not agree and held on the other hand that such franchise would create an awakening among the masses.

The Conference then adjourned but met again on the 27th October for its final sitting when it concluded the unfinished evidence of the Ministers of the Bombay Government. Next day, the 28th October, the Commission left Poona for Lahore.

## THE COMMISSION AT LAHORE

### THE BOYCOTT PROCESSION

The members of the Statutory Commission reached Lahore on the 30th October 1928 in the afternoon by a special train and were received on the platform by the representative of the Governor, by the Chief Secretary on behalf of the Punjab Government and by the hosts of the members of both the bodies. The entire Lahore station area was guarded by the police and barbed wires were used to keep out the crowd.

Enthusiastic scenes were witnessed on this day when a procession carrying black flags with the inscription "Simon Go Back" and led by prominent leaders and consisting of about several thousand people, started at about 1 p.m. from the Municipal Gardens outside the Mochi Gate, towards the Railway Station. At the head of the procession were leaders like Lala Lajpat Rai, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Sardar Mangal Singh, Dr. Alam, Sardul Singh Cavesheer, Lala Dunichand, Lala Bodhraj, Raizada Hansrai, Dr. Gopichand Bharagava, Maulana Zafar Ali, Abdul Qadir Kasuri and other prominent Nationalists including a large number of leaders who had come from the mofussil specially for the occasion.

As the procession proceeded on its way, shouts of "Simon Go Back" rent the air. A large number of citizens joined the procession on the way.

From the Mochi Gate, the procession passed through Brandeth Road and Circular Road via Landa Bazar and halted at the Mulchand Temple Road, a place about 200 yards from the main gate to the railway platform. There the procession was confronted with barbed wires with strong wooden posts barricading the way to the Railway station. On the first row near the barbed wires stood prominent leaders including Lala Lajpat Rai, Maulana Zafar Ali and others. It was alleged that while the procession was perfectly non-violent, some high police officials used their lathis on the first row of the procession, which included Lalaji and other

nationalist leaders. It was further alleged that while the police officials were thus using their lathies, one of them struck Lala Lajpat Rai in the chest.

#### LALA LAJPAT RAI'S STATEMENT

At a monster public meeting held in the evening of the 30th in the Municipal Gardens outside the Mori Gate in which 15,000 people attended, Lala Lajpat Rai recalled what happened in Lahore in 1921 in connection with the civil disobedience campaign in the days of non-co-operation, how a meeting of the Congress Committee was declared unlawful, and how the volunteers were beaten and how arrests were made. "But to-day" he said, "the campaign against the Commission has been met not by handcuffs, but by lathi blows." Continuing, Lalaji said how at first he was for reasons of his own, disinclined to join the demonstration but when he was informed on his arrival this morning from Etawa, that orders under Section 144 had been promulgated, he at once informed the leaders in charge of the demonstration that he was prepared to go with them wherever they would like him to go. Incidentally Lalaji told the audience that the promise he made to the local Congress leaders that whatever might be his differences with them he would always be with them in times of emergency, he had kept to-day.

Proceeding Lalaji said: "We determined in the morning to carry out our programme without violating any of the conditions laid down in the rules, and we did so. We assembled near the Railway Station, and finding the barbed wire barricades, we made no attempt to cross or rush it. We were absolutely peaceful, and gave no provocation to the police to attack us. But a Police officer, said to be the Superintendent of Police in Lahore, whose name was afterwards given as Scott, began to strike with lathis. He had a knobbed hunter in his hand. He gave me two blows and two of his constables gave me another two. One of these blows was aimed at my heart, and very near my heart I received a stroke which has caused a bruise sufficiently long and broad.

Continuing Lalaji said: "Similar blows were struck at Raizada Hansraj, whose hand was profusely bleeding even there on the spot. Dr. Gopichand received a blow on the head, and the mark on his head was visible. Dr. Alam and Dr. Satyapal received blows on their arms which are still paining, and I can swear, by anything sacred to me, that none of these gentlemen did anything which deserved this cowardly treatment from the police. In the whole procession, consisting of thousands of men, I did not see more than two or three walking sticks of which I had one. Thank God that I kept cool and in spite of the provocation I did not use my stick or else the situation would have become very serious. I am also thankful to the young men in the procession who obeyed my order and sat down and did not retaliate which should have put the European Police officers on the other side to shame. But nothing daunts the arrogance and intoxication born of political power and military strength. Several times I shouted for the name of the officer who had attacked me pointing him out by my finger, but he had not the courage or courtesy to give me his name. Neither did any one else."

Proceeding Lalaji said: "The stray assault on a crowd unarmed, without that crowd having in the least given them any provocation and without declaring that crowd to be illegal or unlawful and without giving any warning to it, is the most cowardly thing that can be done by any man much less by an officer of position. I am on the other hand happy that this Government rules with the help of these cowards because the greater their number the sooner will be the dawn of the day of emancipation."

#### THE OFFICIAL VERSION

The official version stated that processions and meetings were never absolutely forbidden and that meetings were never forbidden at all. The only processions forbidden were those which had not had the previous sanction of the Superintendent of Police. Last night, the Superintendent of Police issued orders, that he would not interfere with any procession inside the circular road or which proceeded to the station by certain routes indicated to the leaders of the boycott movement in writing in the morning of 30th and they were followed to the letter.

The number of demonstrators that actually came to the station were variously

estimated from 600 to 1,000, the latter being the absolute maximum at the railway station. Moveable barbed wire barricades were put across the entrances from the main roads, from the city to the station. The barricade across the road leading from Landa Bazar, which was the road along which the demonstrations came, did not cover the whole width of the road by about four or five feet. At one time, an attempt was made by a part of the crowd to force their way through the gap, and either then or just before, a few stones were thrown at the police holding the barricade. For instance, one European sergeant was hit by a stone in his efforts to prevent breach of the barricade. The police used lathies on those agitators whom they could reach. It is certain that Lala Lajpat Rai's umbrella was broken and it is believed that he and one or two other persons near the barricade were struck by lathies. It is not believed that they received injuries. Apart from that, there was no clash between the police and the agitators at the barriers. The clash which occurred went on perhaps for half-a-minute.

After the Commission left the station, the demonstrators returned to the city and went in procession through the main bazar. The report says the number was about 300. At about 7 o'clock, the procession emerged from Lahori Gate, and showed intention of crossing the circular road into Anarkali. As the Superintendent of Police's orders forbade the crossing of the circular road by any procession they were held up at this point, and informed that if they attempted to disobey the orders, of which they had been made aware, they would be dispersed if necessary by force. They dismissed, and eventually proceeded along the circular road towards the Mori Gate, where a meeting as previously arranged was held.

#### LALAJI ON THE OFFICIAL VERSION.

The following is Lala Lajpat Rai's statement on the official version :—

"The official version is full of lies. I challenge its author to bring a suit against me for libel so that I may get an opportunity to expose the doings of the police in a court of justice. The statement published in certain papers that I attempted to enter the prohibited area by crossing the small passage which was not covered by the barrier is a lie. I did nothing of the kind. The more I think of the matter the more I am convinced that the attack on me was deliberate. Again, the statement that there was a shower of bricks and wooden slippers from the rear part of the crowd on the police is another lie, which has been invented to justify the unlawful action of the police. No mention has been made in the official statement of the injury sustained by Raizada Hansraj and others. It is also stated that some members of the crowd returned the blows dealt by the police. There is nothing to beat it. I notice that there is no end to these lies. I repeat my challenge to the officials."

#### LAHORE—1st NOVEMBER 1928

The Simon Joint Free Conference commenced its Lahore sittings on the 1st November in the morning, 21 members being present. Colonel Lane-Fox and Mr. Kikabhai Premchand were absent. The Punjab Committee was fully represented. Sir John Simon announced that it was proposed to hear the evidence of various officials of the Secretariat first and then non-official evidence. Mr. EMERSON, Chief Secretary, was called in as the first witness.

Questioned by Sir John Simon he said that he had been in the service for 23 years and had worked in 10 out of 28 districts and in two Indian States.

Sir John Simon asked him what were the functions of Commissioners of divisions. Mr. Emerson explained that a Commissioner was an administrative and appellate officer but not an executive officer.

He explained the important functions he performed and how one part of his work, namely, co-ordinating activities in respect of law and order, had proved most useful during the Akali agitation. A Commissioner's duties in supervising the working of local bodies had almost overtaxed his capacity.

Replying to the Chairman he declared that the responsibility and usefulness of Divisional Commissioners had increased with the Reforms Government and was opposed to their abolition. There was corruption, he said, in all departments of Government and so also in the Irrigation Department. Government considered this an extremely important department.

Examined by Lord Burnham and Captain Sikandar Hayat Khan witness said that Dyarchy in theory would not have worked if the personal factor had not made it a success through the efforts made by members and Ministers to work together in a spirit of give and take.

Chaudhri Chhotu Ram suggested that the Punjab Council played an important part in the success of Dyarchy.—Witness agreed.

Raja Narindranath asked whether the selection of Ministers was not made on the ground of their belonging to an agricultural class?—Mr. Emerson said he had no knowledge of the subject.

Mr. Emerson, examined by Sir John Simon, explained the duties of the Commissioner of a division. This officer, he said, kept an eye on criminal work, and if the staff could not cope with it the Commissioner advised the Government to increase the staff. Then again, in the matter of law and order, the Commissioner took action against movements threatening peace. In the days of the Akali movement the Commissioner played an important part in this respect.

The Commissioner was the appellate authority in revenue matters and in respect of local bodies. The Commissioner not only scrutinised their budgets, but had the power of intervention in their affairs. This work had largely increased during recent years, and had overtaxed the capacity for dealing with it.

Finally, Mr. Emerson added that, with the removal of the Commissioner, there would be more ground for complaint of centralization.

Sir John Simon, referring to the Government memorandum, said that it showed that the co-operative movement was very well organised in the Province. As regards irrigation, this was important as not only they earned water rates, but also the assessment of lands went up where there was irrigation.

Mr. Emerson agreed and added that the canals had a very important bearing on the finances of the Province. The Government waste lands had fetched a good price, with the result that no loans had been found necessary for capital expenditure.

Sir John Simon asked whether the Irrigation Department was free from corruption.

Mr. Emerson said the Department was free from corruption. Corruption depended on opportunities and inducements.

Asked by Sir John Simon to describe how dyarchy had worked, Mr. Emerson said that it was realised from the first that it would be a difficult work. For Dyarchy to be strictly in accordance with the principles which were supposed to underlie it, there must be constant co-operation between the two halves and a tradition had grown up that on important questions there should be joint discussions between the two sides. Members of Government found it useful to consult the Ministers, and the Ministers found it helpful to consult Members. Dyarchy had thus worked extremely well.

Lord Burnham : Is it then your considered opinion that in spite of theoretical objections the system of Dyarchy has proved workable and satisfactory in this Province?—Mr. Emerson replied that it was the co-operation between Members of Government and the Ministers who worked the system, which made it possible to work it satisfactorily, and without friction.

Major Atlee asked how far the co-operative movement proved a school for self-government?—Mr. Emerson said that the Co-operative Department had tried to make the members take an interest in the working of the societies, and he could not say, in the absence of personal experience, how far it has educated the people in self-government.

Captain Sikandar Hayat Khan, Chairman of the Punjab Committee, asked whether any case had occurred in which the Commissioner had turned down the budget of a local board?—Mr. Emerson replied that he knew of one case in which the budget was sent back for reconsideration.

Captain Sikandar Hayat Khan next pointed out that the Irrigation Department had been in charge of an Indian member ever since the introduction of the Reforms, and wanted to know if any deterioration had taken place in its efficiency.

Mr. Emerson was unable to answer the question.

Captain Sikandar Hayat Khan : You think it was not the system, but the personal factor which made Dyarchy a success?

Mr. Emerson : Yes, but for it, the scheme might have broken down.

Lord Burnham : Yes, I understood you in the latter sense.

Raja Narindranath asked whether members belonging to the agricultural classes dominated the Ministries and the Ministers were selected from these classes. He also wanted to know whether Lala Harkishan Lal supported the communal policy of Sir Fazli Hussain?—Mr. Emerson was unable to answer, and Sir John Simon intervening, said that the matter concerned entirely the action of the Governor, and the witness could not be expected to know the motives of the Governor.

Raja Narindranath said he wished to bring on record that he and 26 members of the Council protested in 1922, and he passed on the correspondence on the subject to Sir John Simon for perusal.

Dr. Gokulchand Narang pointed out that the Council had repeatedly asked for the abolition of Divisional Commissionership as it was thought that Commissioners acted as post offices. He wanted to know if any reduction had taken place in the functions of the Commissioners after the Reforms.

Mr. Emerson said, on the other hand, both responsibility and the usefulness of the Commissioners had very much increased under the Reforms.

Dr. Narang asked whether Ministers could initiate any scheme of public utility and earmark funds for that purpose?

Mr. Emerson replied that neither a Member nor a Minister could earmark any amount till the Council had voted. The Finance Department generally examined the scheme, and if its opinion was not acceptable to the Minister, the latter could take the matter up to the Executive Council; but generally in such cases the Minister and the Finance Member discussed the matter, and in very rare cases the matter went up to the Executive Council.

Dr. Narang asked why the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council was not consulted more often?—Mr. Emerson replied that their advice was sought on the schemes that had been approved by Government.

Sardar Ujjal Singh pointed out that the Retrenchment Committee had recommended the abolition of three Divisional Commissionership.

Mr. Emerson said that Government did not accept that recommendation

#### Mr. Stead's Evidence.

Mr. Charles Stead, Inspector-General of Police in the Punjab, examined next by the Conference, declared that all the 22,000 policemen of the Province knew how to bear arms. The force was not affected by communal feeling, and as regards corruption it was probably due to the fact that the men in the force joined it not for the sake of a career, but "for an opportunity." This defect did not apply to the police force only. He was of opinion that compared with the European Investigating Officer, in cases of corruption, the position of the Indian Officer was uncomfortable, as all sorts of influence might be brought to bear on him.

The Commission then rose late in the afternoon, having held the longest sitting since its public enquiry.

#### LAHORE—2nd NOVEMBER, 1928.

The Joint Free Conference met at 10 o'clock this morning. Mr. Miles IRVING, who had been collecting data for the Commission in the Punjab, and Khan Bahadur Muzaffar Hussain Khan, Election Commissioner, were examined.

Mr. Miles Irving said that the Punjab Government had expressed no opinion regarding the communal composition of the Council of the future. He would not, therefore, express any opinion on the subject.

Sir John Simon said that they only wanted to get a picture of the working of the Reforms in respect of communal division and franchise.

Mr. Irving gave figures showing that, while Mahomedans formed 55 per cent of the population in the Province, their voters were 44 per cent. of the total. Sikhs who formed only 11 per cent. of the population had 24 per cent. of the total and Hindus, who formed 33 per cent., had 33 per cent. of the total.

Mr. Irving further pointed out that though the urban population was 11 per cent and rural population 89 per cent., urban voters were 70 per cent. and rural voters 88 per cent. of the total.

Sir John Simon said that the rural area had not got representation among voters according to their mathematical proportion.

Mr. Irving further added that, if the existing qualification as regards assessment of land which applied to urban areas were applied to rural areas, it would practically double the Mahomedan and Sikh votes in rural areas, but would not improve the position of Hindus to the same extent.

Mr. Irving told Captain Sikander Hayat Khan that no member in the Punjab Council could be said to represent the small landowner.

He agreed with Dr. Narang that the majority in the Punjab Council belonged to the agricultural classes and that the Land Alienation Act stood in the way of non-agriculturists buying lands and becoming rural voters.

Mr. M. C. Rajah pointed out that, though there were about three millions of depressed classes in the Punjab, they had no representative in the Council.

Sir John Simon said that while the hardships of the depressed classes were not the same in the Punjab as in some other Provinces the point raised by Mr. Rajah was important.

### Mr. Beazley's Evidence

Mr. J. G. Beazley, Secretary to the Government in the Transferred Departments, was the next witness examined.

Mr. Cadogan opened the examination by asking whether it was a fact that there was no communal representation on District Boards and whether there was a system of adjustment to secure a fairly equitable representation of the various communities.

Mr. Beazley replied in the affirmative but added that there had been a demand for communal representation. The Deputy Commissioner was the Chairman of all the District Boards in the Province except two. If there was a desire among 50 per cent. of the elected members to have a non-official as Chairman, the Deputy Commissioner always stood out.

Recently, the Government enquired of some District Boards whether they wished to have non-officials as their Chairman and every one of them replied that they did not wish to have a non-official as Chairman. When a Deputy Commissioner was Chairman, the control and supervision were effective.

Mr. Beazley also said that the Chairmen were non-officials in all the Municipalities except in three. Under the present system of government, there was an effective system by which the Central authority could exercise control over the Municipalities and District Boards.

### LAHORE—3rd NOVEMBER 1928

Giving evidence on this day Nawab Muzaffar Khan, who had acted as Election Commissioner, explained how voters' lists were compiled, and votes registered in the Punjab. He was of opinion that the voters' lists in the Province were fairly accurate. During the last Council election 305,873 votes were polled. In one constituency, votes recorded was 75 per cent. of the total number of voters.

Sir John Simon said he was glad to hear that the percentage of votes polled was gradually increasing.

Continuing Nawab Muzaffar Khan said that on the occasion of the last elections 1,190 women voted for a constituency out of a total of 21,000. He attributed the small number to the fact that women suffrage had been introduced but a short time before the elections. In the case of Moslem women, purdah proved to be a handicap. Another reason was that separate polling booths could not be set up for women.

Sir John Simon said that in England in the past there had been cases of bribing voters, but conditions had improved considerably. He asked whether cases of bribing voters had occurred in the Punjab? Nawab Muzaffar Khan replied that there were cases of feeding voters, but this was due to the fact that in rural areas there were no shops, and besides Indians were a very hospitable people.

Sir John Simon asked whether the Commissioners would receive hospitality if they went to villages? Witness: You are welcome visitors: but hospitality is extended even to unwelcome visitors (Laughter).

Nawab Muzaffar Khan admitted that in many cases, candidates for the Assembly had no personal touch with their voters owing to the vastness of the constituencies. They generally canvassed through agents.

### Punjab Labour Board's Evidence

A deputation of the Punjab Central Labour Board was next examined. The deputation urged that, if franchise was not made universal, every member of a registered Trade Union should be given the right of voting for the Provincial and Central Legislatures. The Deputation was headed by Mr. M. A. Khan, their President and the General Secretary of the General Workers' Union, N. W. Railway.

Their examination was opened by Mr. Vernon Hartshorn to whom they said that under the present Government, both for the Provincial and the Central Legislatures, voting qualifications were determined by age, education and ownership of property, and thus the great masses who formed the major portion of India's population were barred from taking any part in the constitution of the Government to make the future Government more representative. It was essential that general adult franchise should be adopted and if the present circumstances did not allow of this, property qualifications should at least be so relaxed as to cover a fairly large proportion of the population to make representation in real spirit.

So far as labour was concerned, every member of a registered Trade Union should be given the right of voting for the Provincial and Central Legislatures. Achhoot (untouchables) organisations and tenants paying about Rs. 2 monthly as rent should also be given this right. Women aged 35 and those educated up to a certain standard, and not less than 22 years of age, should also be given the right of voting. The Deputation urged the introduction of joint electorates with multiple transferable vote ; but the allotments of seats should be fixed according to the population of each community. One-fourth of the total seats should be reserved for labour : half by nomination ( to be made by labour organisations ) and half by election in special constituencies created for the purpose.

Mr. Hartshorn wanted to know the strength of the Trade Unions.

Mr. Khan replied that registered Trade Unions had a membership of about 500,000 and unregistered about 1,000,000.

The Deputation urged the appointment of a separate Labour Minister in each Province, to be nominated by the Governor along with the other Ministers. He should be in charge of all matters relating to the welfare of labour, the peasantry and the untouchables ; their education, health and sanitation, and he should see to the proper operation of all laws touching the interests of labour, such as the Trade Unions Act, the workmen's Compensation Act, the Trades Dispute Act, etc.

Question : Do you not think these will involve too much work on one Minister ?

Answer : At present Ministers have larger portfolios.

The deputation urged the appointment of courts of arbitration in each Province, with a tribunal consisting of three representatives of labour, three of capital, two of the Government and two of the public. In case of disputes between labour and capital not being settled within two months' time, the tribunal should have right of interfering in the matter and giving the final award.

The Deputation stated that the present Councils consisted of members of the bourgeois, and landlord classes. In the case of labour employed by Government the employees should be given an equal partnership in the management, control, direction, and finance of the Department concerned through their representatives nominated by their registered Trade Unions.

It should be made obligatory on employers to open day and night schools and colleges, at their own expense, according to the requirements of labour. Such education should be compulsory and free of charge for the labour classes.

Dr. Narang : Supposing I own a small factory with 50 workmen, should I open a college for labourers ? Witness : You join with another employer for this purpose.

The Deputation urged the grant of various privileges for labour such as stability of service, a living wage and old age pension.

LAHORE 15th NOVEMBER 1928

## Hindu Deputation's Evidence

The Joint Free Conference took up non-official evidence to-day, entering upon the most controversial stage of its inquiry in the Punjab. A Hindu deputation waited on them in the morning and a Moslem one in the afternoon. The Hindu deputation was led by Pandit Nanakchand. The other members of the deputation included the Hon'ble Rai Bahadur Lala Ramsaran Das, Rai Bahadur Motisagar, Rai Bahadur Durgadas, Pandit Bishen Narain, Rai Bahadur Sewakram, Mr. Purilal Jaganath, Mr. Agnihotri, Professor Gulshan Rai and others. The deputationists represented the National Reform Party in the Punjab Council and the Provincial Hindu Sabha and the National Democratic League. Professor Gulshan Rai submitted his own memorandum.

Dr. Gokulchand led the examination for the Provincial Committee, followed by Chaudhuri Zafarali, Sirdar Ujjal Singh, Mr. Roberts and Captain Sikan-der Hayat Khan while from the Central Committee Sirdar Shivdev Singh Uberoi, Sir Zulfiqar Ali Khan, Dr. Suhrawardy, Sir Arthur Froom and Sir Hari Singh Gour examined the witnesses.

After both the Provincial and Central Committees had examined the deputation, Sir John briefly examined the witnesses in order to elicit their point of view clearly. It appeared that the conference had agreed beforehand to adhere to a strict allocation of time between the wings, and thus out of two hours and a quarter, the Provincial and Central Committee took one hour each while Sir John occupied daily quarter of an hour. Strict adherence to the time table minimised largely the tension which the evidence that was tendered often tended to create. In spite of the considerable restraint shown by all sections of the conference there were frequent occasions when feelings threatened to run high. Sir John controlled the proceedings with tact and firmness.

One important feature of the day's proceedings was the disclosure made to the Conference at Poona evidently in camera and by one of the members of the Bombay Government that one way of reconciling the demand of the Muslims for separate electorates and of the Hindus for joint electorates would be to provide for a panel of Muslim candidates to be elected purely by a Muslim electorate from whom the Joint Electorate shall be free to elect muslim representatives. Sir John Simon said that it was claimed for this scheme that while permitting joint electorates with reservation of seats for Muslims it did at the same time assure that any representative returned by the Joint Electorate would be a representative acceptable to the Muslim community and not merely a sham representative.

Sir John Simon said he held no views on the merits of the scheme. He only wanted to know the views of the deputation.

Pandit Nanakchand, leader of the Deputation, said that he had not considered the scheme and could give no off-hand answer, while one member of the deputation intervened and said that he thought it to be a good scheme.

Sir John Simon said the leader of the deputation had exercised his discretion wisely in not giving an off-hand reply as it was an intricate question. He continued in reply to an eager statement of another deputationist that he liked the scheme "I would not be in a hurry to approve it."

To Sir John Simon who pointed out that the declaration of no reforms except on the basis of abolition of all communal principle, went contrary to the Nehru report, Pandit Nanakchand said that the Nehru report was a compromise scheme drawn in emulation of the Government with a view to enlist the support of Muslims. He was opposed to any compromise. That was his party's view also. They would even ask for withdrawal of the present reforms if communalism was continued.

Dr. Gokulchand Narang : What is the view of your party in regard to political advance ?

Pandit Nanakchand : We are in favour of Dominion Status provided there



is complete abolition of the communal principle in the legislatures in the local bodies, in the services etc. in all parts of India and provided also there is no discrimination of any caste or religion in matters of distribution of civic rights or the imposition of civic disabilities. Granted these two conditions we are in favour of advance to Dominion Status. But in case communal representation is retained in any shape or form and in any part of India, we are not in favour of any advance.

Dr. Narang : It is not stating a broad proposition ?

Pandit Nanakchand : No, we state it as our considered and deliberate opinion. In our opinion communal representation has intensified communal bitterness and is responsible for the frequent riots, murders and bloodshed which have taken place since the reforms.

Sir John Simon : Do you consider communal representation responsible for these things ?

Pandit Nanakchand : Yes. I can give authority for this statement from the opinions expressed by the leaders of the Hindu, Muslim and Sikh communities.

Sir John Simon suggested that Pandit Nanakchand might supply the "conference" secretariat with his citations of authority.

Continuing Pandit Nanakchand stated that with the introduction of the communal principle under the Montagu Reforms in regard to legislatures it had been extended to municipalities in order to secure Muslim predominance over other minority communities ; and it was the deliberate opinion of the Hindus of the Punjab that communal representation was not extended to District Boards for the chief reason that if it was introduced the Hindus would have gained more seats and the Muslims would have lost some seats. He also maintained that the National Union Party in the Punjab Council was really a Muslim Party though it included some Hindus. To call the party a Rural or Agricultural Party was a misnomer. It was a camouflage.

Pandit Nanakchand dissented from the evidence of Mr. Emerson, Chief Secretary in regard to the statement that appointment to the services on communal lines had not affected efficiency. In the witness's opinion it had.

Dr. Narang : What is the result ?

Pandit Nanakchand : It leads to in-efficiency and corruption. Recently, when certain public servants were prosecuted they offered a communal defence. If he was a Muslim, he alleged that the charge was due to Hindu machinations, and if he was a Hindu he alleged vice versa. Sir Mahomed Shafi as counsel for the accused in a case in which a public servant was charged, put forward this communal defence.

Lord Burnham : I am sorry to intervene. But, I appeal to the Chairman whether statements about individuals should be allowed to be made to the conference unless supported by authority.

Pandit Nanakchand : I can give authority in support of my statement. I can tender to the conference a report of the arguments of Sir Md. Shafi in that case.

Lord Burnham : I only appealed to the Chairman.

Sir John Simon : It is understood that in a grave constitutional inquiry of the sort in which the conference is engaged it is not desirable to make mention of individuals. In this case, a reference has been made to the arguments said to have been used by Sir Md. Shafi in his capacity as counsel. What counsel says in his capacity as counsel cannot be used to prove anything. I would ask the official shorthand writer to strike off the reference to Sir Md. Shafi.

Pandit Nanakchand : I am sorry, Sir, to have made a personal reference.

Continuing, Pandit Nanakchand said : We are not in favour of any political advance unless the communal principle is totally abolished, as we consider that any power given would be used not for the advancement of the country but for the domination of one community over another.

Dr. Narang : Is the provision in the Government of India Act that none shall be disabled from entering service by reason of creed, etc. acted up to ?

Pandit Nanakchand : No.

Dr. Narang : Do you favour an amendment of the Government of India Act to secure that none shall be disqualified for the highest post by reason of caste, creed etc. ? Pandit Nanakchand : Yes.

To a further question Pandit Nanakchand said that the Land Alienation Act was one illustration of communal legislation. The local Government notified certain castes and communities as members of agricultural tribes. The notified castes and communities included persons who held no land and who did not subsist on land and who were in no way agriculturists. And persons who owned lands and who subsisted on land and who were agriculturists for generations were excluded from those who were members of notified agricultural tribes.

Lala Harkishenlal had sought to introduce a Bill to exempt from the operation of the Land Alienation Act acquisition of lands for industrial purposes, but it was defeated by the votes of the so-called members of the agricultural tribes.

Dr. Narang : Lala Harkishen Lal's Bill was only for giving effect to the recommendation of the Industrial Commission but it was still defeated.

Pandit Nanakchand continued : The Money-Lenders' Bill is another illustration of class legislation. It was an effort by the Muslims to destroy the commerce and trade of the Hindus and Sikhs. It affected not only the Hindus and Sikhs, but also Muslims who were not members of agricultural tribes. Twenty-six Muslim military officers had memorialised the Government against that Bill. Sikhs not belonging to agricultural tribes had also protested against the Money-Lenders' Bill in a conference held at Hoshiarpur.

Sir John Simon to Dr. Narang : What is your suggestion ? I understand that you regard these pieces of legislation as illustrating communal legislation. But what is your further point ? Do you suggest that the Parliament should repeal some acts of the local legislature, or do you suggest any amendment to the Government of India Act ? How far are these questions relevant to the constitutional inquiry ?

Dr. Narang : We want an amendment of the Government of India Act to debar legislatures from undertaking any legislation which is discriminatory in character with reference to caste, creed or birth. Raja Narindranath has submitted a draft clause which embodies this idea.

Sir John Simon : I understand the point. The British Commissioners are fully alive to this point.

Pandit Nanakchand : There is a similar suggestion in the Nehru Report also.

To Dr. Narang Pandit Nanakchand said : I would recommend the adoption of the majority of the declarations contained in the Nehru Report for embodiment in the constitution. The depressed classes are an expropriated class in this province. I want all disabilities in regard to them to be removed and I want that they should be placed on the same footing with high caste Hindus and Muslims. I am not in favour of separate electorates or reservation for the depressed classes, as it would only lead to their exploitation by interested persons. I am opposed on principle to all reservation. Mr. Emerson, Chief Secretary, is wrong when he suggests that high caste Hindus are responsible for the condition of the depressed classes. We have four societies in the Punjab working for the amelioration of the depressed classes. Brahmins and depressed classes inter-dine in the Punjab. In the D. A. V. College which is a premier institution, depressed class boys are admitted freely. Recently Brahmin cooks refused to cook for depressed class boys, and wanted to make a difference, and they were bodily dismissed by the management. The Hindus in the Punjab Legislative Council have sought to remove the civic and political disabilities of the depressed classes but opposition has been met with from Muslims and the Government.

Continuing, Pandit Nanakchand said he would recommend increase of seats in the Punjab Council to 150.

Dr. Narang : Do not Hindus who are in a minority in the province want any safeguards ? Pandit Nanakchand : No. They are prepared to make a sacrifice in the interest of democratic advance.

Dr. Narang : Do you want abolition of communal representation in every province ? Pandit Nanakchand : Yes the politics of one province react on the politics of another province. In the Punjab the politics of the United Provinces react on its politics.

Continuing, Pandit Nanakchand said : It is my personal view that whenever any Hindu is appointed as a Minister, he should be really a representative Hindu. He would suggest that a convention be established by which a panel of Hindu names

should be submitted to the Governor by the Hindu members of the Council from which the Governor should select his Minister. He would like the same policy to be followed in selecting Muslim and Sikh Ministers. It would be necessary to retain this principle for sometime until communal feelings which were now violently manifested subsided. "I am in favour of joint responsibility of Ministers to the legislature. I also favour transfer of law, order and justice to the Central Government. In my opinion the Central Government should retain powers of superintendence and direction over the local Government.

Lala Jagannath Agarwala here explained the point of view of the deputation. He said : Our considered view is that the federal system of government is not suited to this country. We want a unitary form of government with certain autonomy to the provinces. The history of India shows the necessity of a strong Central Government.

Pandit Nanakchand then explained why the Hindus wanted certain safeguards in regard to the defence of India. He said : We would point out that the Punjab is practically a Frontier Province. Next to the North-West Frontier, it will have to bear the brunt of any invasion. Considering that we have a virile and easily inflammable Muslim population and also in view of the fact that the Muslims of the province have a tendency to look to Afghanistan and other Muslim countries for protection as evidenced by the Hijrat Movement of 1922 and 1923 and also considering that the Hindus have a large stake in the Punjab, we want certain safeguards. We want abolition of the convention and rule by which certain Hindu sections classified as non-martial races, are not recruited to the Army.

Chaudhuri Zafarullah : Why do you claim that communal representation is responsible for communal tension when in a large number of municipal committees and in the District Boards Joint Electorates prevail ? Is it not a fact that a riot took place at Rawalpindi and joint electorates exist in Rawalpindi Municipality ?

Pandit Nanakchand : My point is that owing to the introduction of communal representation, communal leaders and newspapers have come into being poisoning the atmosphere in the Punjab and rendering it difficult for the Hindus and Muslims to live peacefully together.

Chaudhuri Zafarullah : In the Punjab both separate electorates and joint electorates are being tried side by side.

Pandit Nanakchand : But in order to secure return of communally-minded men communal leaders and papers have created an atmosphere in which arson, loot and riots have become frequent occurrences.

Chaudhuri Zafarullah : But in separate electorates one Muslim would stand against another Muslim candidate. How can it lead to bitterness ?

Pandit Nanakchand : It does. It is only that a Muslim who appeals most to the bigotry and communal passion of the Muslims that gets returned. The same is true of the Hindu candidate also.

Chaudhuri Zafarullah : May not the same thing happen in joint electorates ?

Pandit Nanakchand : It might happen for some time, but it will be a temporary phase. You presuppose only one Hindu and one Muslim contesting. In fact, there will be many Hindus and many Muslims contesting.

Chaudhuri Zafarullah : Is it not a fact that under the Minto-Morley Reforms under joint electorates, the struggle always was boiled down to a struggle between the Muslim and non-Muslim candidate ?

Pandit Nanakchand : I do not know than it was so.

Dr. Narang : Under the Morley-Minto Reforms, it was by indirect election.

Pandit Nanakchand : My friend, the Hon'ble Lala Ramsarandas, reminds me that in one election the Muslim candidate, Mr. Yusuf, beat him by one vote.

Chaudhuri Zafarullah : Is it the view of all Hindus that there should be no advance unless there be abolition of the communal principle ?

Pandit Nanakchand : That is our view.

To Sir John Simon, Pandit Nanakchand reiterated that it was the considered opinion of the deputation that there should be no advance unless there was complete abolition of the communal principle. The deputation opposed even joint electorates with reservation. The deputationists also wanted that the communal principle should be eliminated from the services and all other bodies.

To Chaudhuri Zafarullah, Pandit Nanakchand said that he relied on the report of the Co-operative Department for his proposition that communal appointments resulted in inefficiency.

Chaudhuri Zafarullah : In that report the Inspector says that inefficiency is due to the reluctance of bank directors to appoint Banya accountants although they are best qualified and to their preference for members of the agriculture tribes. It is not the Government that appoint.

Pandit Nanakchand : It illustrates my point all the same.

Referring to the Money Lenders' Bill, Pandit Nanakchand said that when a similar bill was sought to be introduced in the Assembly, its introduction was opposed by the Government of India. But in the Punjab, the local Council passed the Bill into law. But the Governor withheld assent.

To question by Chaudhuri Zafarullah, Pandit Nanakchand said that he objected to imposing a disability on the depressed classes which would prevent them from acquiring land. There was no statutory prohibition, but there was the customary law which was enforceable by the law courts which prevented them from acquiring lands. He was opposed to that disability on its fundamental aspect.

In the Punjab villages, the feudal system prevailed which was opposed to democracy. According to the feudal system prevailing in the Punjab villages, non-proprietors had to pay certain levies if they performed marriage or other ceremonies.

Continuing, Pandit Nanakchand said : I am not opposed to adult franchise, but I would not recommend it for the legislatures immediately. I would recommend adult franchise in the elections to the local boards and municipalities in the first instance. I favour lowering of the franchise to a certain extent, but I have not worked out the details. I would give votes to literates. I would also advocate increased representation for the urban constituencies. In fact, I would make no distinction between the rural and urban constituencies. I would suggest increased representation for the University, Commerce and Industries. I would suggest special representation for income-tax payers.

Chaudhuri Zafarullah : Are not Muslims who form 44 per cent only of the voters in a minority against the Hindus and Sikhs combined ?

Sir John Simon : The witness is entitled to point out that one must not merely take the total percentage, but must also look into the strength of the respective constituencies.

Sir John Simon then took the Nehru Report and pointed out that according to the statistics and maps given in it, Muslims predominated in West Punjab, Hindus and Sikhs predominated in the East Punjab, and there was also a mixed zone.

To Dr. Narang, who invited attention to a passage in the Nehru Report in explanation of the statistics, Sir John Simon said : "This is not the first time, I assure you, that I have looked into it."

Pandit Nanakchand then explained that he favoured the provision of special educational facilities to all backward communities whether Muslims, depressed classes, or any other communities, as he believed that education was the foundation of democracy. Pandit Nanakchand then said that his party in the Council consisted of 19 members, of whom four were members of agricultural tribes. They were not present in the deputation and one or two of them had possibly not seen or approved of the memorandum before its submission to the Commission.

To Mr. Roberts, Pandit Nanakchand said that he had not considered the question of the transfer of commerce to the Central Government.

To Sirdar Ujjal Singh, Pandit Nanakchand said that although there was no communal representation in the district boards, the constituencies were so grouped as to secure predominance of certain communities in ward. It amounted to a form of communal representation.

To Sirdar Uberoi, Pandit Nanakchand said: We suggested transfer of Law and Order to the Central Government, because we think that it would secure immunity to these departments from communal influence. We had experience in the Punjab of attacks on judges of the High Court and on the constitution of the High Court on communal grounds, which were not calculated to ensure independence. It is our belief that if they were transferred to the Central Government they would be more free from communal attacks.

To Sir Zulfikar Ali Khan Pandit Nanakchand said that he was opposed to reservation for any community in regard to the services.

Sir Zulfikar: Are you then against Indianisation?

Pandit Nanakchand: No, I do not want reservation for any community. I would certainly employ British citizens who are domiciled Indian subjects if they are more fitted than other Indian nationals. He also said that at a conference of Hindus held in Lahore during the last visit of the Commission a resolution was passed that even the present reforms may be withdrawn if the communal principle was not abolished. It indicated the strength of the Hindu feeling on the question. Pandit Nanakchand also said that if as a result of the appointments on the basis of efficiency only, Muslims were appointed to 100 per cent of the posts he would not oppose it.

Dr. Suhrawardy: Do you not think that more than communal representation, the caste system is a greater impediment to national advance? Is not the caste system an enemy of Hinduism? Pandit Nanakchand: To the extent that caste is an impediment to national progress, we are seeking to abolish it.

Dr. Suhrawardy: Has not caste been the bane of India since the times of Asoka and Vikramaditya? Dr. Narang: In the times of Asoka, caste was abolished.

Dr. Suhrawardy: I want to put my questions. I have only very little time.

Sir John Simon: I do not want any complaint to be made. It is the conference as a whole that has agreed to rationing of time, and it is not open to a member to complain after agreeing to the decision.

Dr. Suhrawardy: I make no complaint Sir. I was only thinking loudly.

Dr. Narang: I would like to make it clear, Sir, that I agreed to the time limit only because there was no help for it.

Sir John Simon: As practical men engaged in practical work, we cannot but ration the time.

Dr. Suhrawardy: Will you agree that no objection was raised to the introduction of communal representation in the Punjab?

Pandit Nanakchand: It was a blunder.

Dr. Suhrawardy: Do you know that communal representation was introduced in Bengal in 1909 with the consent of Mr. Gokhale, then Congress leader?

Pandit Nanakchand: He was wrong.

Dr. Suhrawardy: Do you know that the Lucknow Pact conceded to Muslims separate electorates? Pandit Nanakchand: It was a great blunder.

Dr. Suhrawardy: I would invite your attention then to a greater blunder. Is it not a fact that the late Sir Surendranath Bannerjee introduced it in Bengal in the Calcutta Corporation against my opposition? Is it not also a fact that Deshbandhu Das conceded to Moslems separate electorates in his Bengal Pact?

Pandit Nanakchand: My reply is that it is not surprising that Hindus in their anxiety to wrest power from the Government should imitate Government's methods and seek to secure alliance of Muslims by promising them what the Government had promised. Pandit Nanakchand then explained that he referred to abolition of caste. He was only referring to civic and political disabilities imposed by caste. He was not referring to social and religious customs.

Sir John Simon: For instance, you were not thinking of admitting depressed classes freely into temples. Pandit Nanakchand: No.

To Sir Aurther Froom, Pandit Nanakchand said that the clause in the Instrument of Instruction to the Governors regarding non-differentiation of classes etc. was inadequate.

Sir John Simon: Your point is that you want a clause in the constitution so that any aggrieved party might be able to challenge any act of legislature in a court of law if he thought that any legislation was ultra vires?

Pandit Nanakchand: Yes.

Sir John Simon: May I invite your attention to the statement in Raja Narindranath's memorandum that joint electorates cannot be forced on any minority community against its will. It is not your party's view?

Pandit Nanakchand: No.

Sir John Simon : May I point out that your party's view is not consistent with the Nehru Report recommendations on the communal question ?

Pandit Nanakchand : In our opinion the recommendations of the Nehru Report contain a compromise in order to please Moslems. We are opposed to any compromise as we do not think it would be in the interests of a democratic Government.

Professor Gulshan Rai explained that if Law and Order were transferred to the Central Government, the Deputy Commissioner might be deprived of his revenue functions and might act under the supervision of the Governor in his capacity as agent of the Central Government.

Sir John Simon : Will it ensure prompt help of the police on occasions when they might be required in connection with transferred subjects.

Prof. Gulshan Rai : I think so.

To Sir John Simon Pandit Nanakchand explained that he complained that certain class of Hindus described as non-martial class were excluded from the Army. His complaint was not that all Hindus were excluded. The Khatri, who furnished generals to Ranjit Singh's army were treated as non-martial classes.

Dr. Gour : Why are you against political advance in case there is no abolition of the communal principle ?

Pandit Nanakchand : Because it would lead to more bitterness to give reforms while retaining the communal principle.

Sir John Simon then asked : Have you considered in what manner the chief objection to the joint electorates can be met ? The chief objection is that it will not secure the return of truly representative Muslims. In Poona, it was suggested to us that wholly communal electorate may be asked to choose a panel of representatives from whom the electorates might make their choice. I have formed no views in regard to the merits of the suggestion. Have you thought about it ?

Pandit Nanakchand : No, I cannot express any off-hand opinion.

One member of the delegation here remarked that it appeared to be a good suggestion.

Sir John Simon : I will not be in a hurry to approve it. Mr. Nanakchand has exercised discretion wisely, in not giving an off-hand answer.

Prof. Gulshan Rai then put forward his view that no amount of communal representation would solve the question and recommended the solution which had found favour with Lord Delamere.

Sir John Simon said he was thankful for the suggestion. This concluded the examination of the Hindu deputation, and the conference rose for lunch.

#### The Muslim Deputation's Evidence.

On the Conference reassembling after lunch, the Muslim deputation led by Sir Mahomed Shafi, appeared in support of the memorandum submitted by the Shafi section of the All-India Muslim League. The deputation comprised nearly twenty members, chief amongst whom were Sir Mahomed Iqbal, Sir Umar Hayat Khan and others.

To Sir John Simon, Sir M. Shafi said, the views of the deputation were enumerated in the memorandum submitted to the "Conference." He was prepared to answer questions in elucidation of the memorandum.

To Chaudhuri Zafarullah, Sir M. Shafi said : Communal representation was introduced simultaneously with the introduction of elections in regard to legislatures. The Minto-Morley Reforms were put in force in January, 1910, and from that time communal representation has been in force. I played my humble part in connection with these reforms. I was one of the six Mahomedans who were invited to confer with the sub-committee of the Executive Council of the Viceroy. Communal representation was introduced with the concurrence of Mr. J. Gopalakrishna Gokhale, who was the leader of the Congress.

Sir Mahomed continued : I, as the General Secretary of the Punjab Provincial Moslem League had a good deal to do with all elections which took place under the Minto-Morley Reforms. In the Punjab we had joint electorates. In every election it used to happen that at the initial stage several Hindu and Muslim candidates stood, but at the final stage the struggle was always between one Hindu and one Muslim candidate.

Sir M. Shafi added : The Hindus did not oppose communal representation when it was introduced under the Minto-Morley Reforms or later even. In 1916 when the Congress and the Muslim League were the only two important political bodies, there was an agreement arrived at in Lucknow in 1916 conceding Muslims separate electorates. It gave the Muslims in Bengal and the Punjab separate electorates ; and in the Montford Reforms, though the Government of India recommended fifty percent of the seats for Muslims, the Joint Committee of Parliament gave the Muslims of Bengal only 40 per cent, which is what the Lucknow Agreement recommended.

Chaudhuri Zafarullah : When did the opposition to separate electorates commenced ?

Sir Shafi : In 1922 there was no opposition to separate electorates right till the end of 1922 December. On the contrary, in the United Provinces during the period of his office my friend, Mr. Chintamani, Minister extended the principle of separate electorates in regard to local boards and municipalities with the concurrence of the Hindu majority in that council. It was in December 1922, that the first session of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha was held in Gaya under the presidency of Pandit Malaviya. At the Gaya session only, Shuddhi and Sangathan were preached. In August 1923, there was a special session of Hindu Mahasabha at Benares. There also Shuddhi and Sangathan were preached. It was for the first time in the session of the Hindu Mahasabha held at Belgaum in December 1924, that a voice was raised against separate electorates ?

Sir John Simon : Is it in 1922 or 1924 that opposition was first voiced against separate electorates ?

Sir M. Shafi : In December 1924. But I divide the period into two parts. One is the period which begins from December 1922. It is our considered opinion that Shuddhi and Sangathan and the demand for abolition of separate electorates are all parts and parcel of one and the same movement. If I am not mistaken the opposition to separate electorates really began with the return from England early in 1924 of Lala Lajpat Rai and the publication of Lord Olivier's letter in the London "Times" against communal electorates.

Chaudhuri Zafarullah : Will joint electorates lead to communal harmony ?

Sir M. Shafi : No, not at all. In our view joint electorates are bound to lead to frequent recurrence of friction between the two communities. As true Nationalists, we are opposed to joint electorates.

Continuing, Sir M. Shafi said: In the separate electorates a Hindu stands against a Hindu and a Muslim against a Muslim. Whatever bitterness may be caused will not last. In joint electorates, it will actually be reduced into a struggle between the two communities' candidates. Instead of promoting communal harmony joint electorates are calculated to lead to friction and increasing communal bitterness. In our view joint electorates are detrimental to the cause of nationalism in the highest degree.

Further questioned Sir M. Shafi said : In joint electorates with reservation Hindus will try to secure election of a dummy Muslim candidate with the support of Hindu voters. Muslims will make similar efforts. These attempts may or may not entirely succeed. But, I am certain that the result of joint electorates will be the composition of legislatures in a manner which will make the legislatures a laughing stock in the country. Sir M. Shafi then said : Mr. Chintamani, a Hindu leader, has borne testimony in his evidence before the Reforms Inquiry Committee of which I was a member that separate electorates, instead of creating communal tension, fostered better relation and mutual goodwill and co-operation. It is on that account that he extended separate electorates during his term of office. -

Chaudhuri Zafarullah : It is contended that communal representation is responsible for communal tension.

Sir M. Shafi : How can it be ? Shuddhi and Sangathan and Tanzim and Tabligh are responsible for communal tension.

Sir M. Shafi then explained that under the Morley-Minto Reforms, out of six elections to the Punjab Council only in one election was a Muslim re-

turned by the University. Sir Fazli Hussain was the successful candidate, but even then he was returned because Sir M. Shafi, as Sir Fazli Hussain's counsel, took objection successfully to the nomination of a Hindu candidate, Raja Harnam Singh, on the ground that he was not a British Indian subject. In the Punjab University, graduates elected two members to the Senate, but since Lord Curzon's Act not one Muslim had been returned.

Sir John Simon: I am a graduate of the Oxford University. In how many election do you think a liberal has been returned? (Laughter)

Sir M. Shafi: But may I point out that in England all are Christians and there is only political difference, and not communal difference.

Sir John Simon: As a graduate of the Oxford University I would ... ..

Sir M. Shafi (interrupting): May I also point out that all are Englishmen springing from the same stock? (More laughter)

Sir M. Shafi then said that Muslim representation in the municipalities and local boards was not proportionate to their population strength.

Sir M. Shafi then explained the genesis of the Land Alienation Act of the Punjab. He said that in Rawalpindi it was during the period of one settlement that large areas of land had passed from the ownership of agricultural tribes into the hands of money-lenders. In consequence grave political danger arose. The Commissioner of Rawalpindi urged on the Punjab Government the desirability of a measure like Land Alienation Act. It protected agricultural tribes whether Hindus, Muslims or Sikhs.

Sir John Simon: I have studied the legislation carefully, and I can appear for an examination on the subject.

Sir M. Shafi: I know Sir John, how carefully you study questions.

Sir John Simon: We are not going into the merits of that legislation. Its only relevance is as an illustration of a certain class of discriminatory legislation. It has been said that there should be provision in the constitution to make such laws ultra vires. What is your view?

Sir M. Shafi: I am opposed to any such provision.

To Raja Narindranath, Sir M. Shafi said that he included in the term "Depressed classes," all pre-Aryan aborigines who numbered sixty millions. He did not object to the inclusion under that terms all pre-Aryan aborigines, whatever their present creed.

Raja Narindranath: Is it on the ground that Muslims were in a minority that the Muslim deputation led by the Aga Khan in 1908 urged on Lord Morley separate electorates?

Sir M. Shafi: That may be one of the reasons. Whatever be the reasons, I want separate electorates for two fundamental reasons. The first is that joint electorates will lead to friction in the conditions existing in India and is detrimental to the cause of nationalism, and the second reason is that it is only through separate electorates that truly representative legislatures can be secured.

Raja Narindranath: Can you cite one case in which in any country separate electorates have been retained at the instance of the majority community while the minority community does not want it?

Sir M. Shafi: I have not studied all constitutions.

Raja Narindranath: It is only in the case of a few countries that separate electorates are retained?

Sir M. Shafi: It may be, but I know of no country in which the parliamentary form of Government has been introduced as in India and conditions are so intricate and complex as one finds them in India. We must decide upon the form of representation which is suited to the actual conditions prevailing in the country.

Raja Narindranath: Will you give the other minority communities the same weightage which you want for the Muslim minorities? Sir M. Shafi: Yes.

Raja Narindranath: In the United Provinces Muslims are only 14 per cent and enjoy thirty per cent representation in the provincial legislature, and 33 1/3 in the central legislature. Will you give the Sikhs who are 14 per cent the same weightage in the Punjab?

Sir M. Shafi: The distinction which is sought to be drawn between the Hindu



and Sikh is artificial. One might as well draw a distinction between a Shia and a Sunni amongst the Muslims. But as long a weightage is given to Sikhs out of 45 per cent, after providing 55 per cent to Muslims, I have no objection. A distinction is sought to be drawn between Sikhs and Hindus for political reasons, just to deprive Muslims of their small majority.

Raja Narindranath : Will you give weightage to minority communities in the services also ? Sir M. Shafi : I will give my personal view, as the League has not expressed its view. I would only give representation to communities according to the population strength in the service.

Raja Narindranath : In the United Provinces Muslims have 47 per cent representation in the services. Would you stop recruitment to the services of Muslims until other communities secure their percentage of representation ?

Sir M. Shafi : No. In the United Provinces, Muslims are more largely represented in the services, because they are educationally advanced. Percentage on the population basis is the minimum and not maximum.

Raja Narindranath : In the United Provinces and the Central Provinces both Hindus and Muslims are equally situated in regard to educational standing, etc. Will you put obstacles in the way of Muslims if they are over-represented in the Punjab ? Sir M. Shafi : I will put no obstacles. In the Punjab, qualified Muslims are to be found for the highest post in the Government. I would lay down the minimum standard of efficiency, and if that qualification is obtained then I will give representation to communities which are not represented.

To a further question, Sir M. Shafi said that he was responsible for the policy of the Government of India, which laid down that in recruitment to the higher services two-third of the vacancies might be filled on merits, and one-third might be filled so as to give representation to unrepresented communities, and that he agreed with that policy.

Sir John Simon : Sir Mahomed, may I ask you to clear up one point ? Under the Minto-Morley system, there was no communal electorate in the Punjab. It would not be therefore correct to say that with the Minto-Morley Reforms a wholly communal system was introduced ? Sir M. Shafi : No. My point was that it was under Minto-Morley system that election to the legislatures was introduced and that with that communal representation was introduced.

Sir John Simon : I quite agree. In the Punjab under the Morley Minto system not one member was returned by a communal electorate ? Sir M. Shafi : Yes.

Sir John Simon : May it not be said to be because it was intended to be applied only to the minority community, and Muslims were in a majority in Punjab ?

Sir M. Shafi : I do not know what can be said to be the real explanation, I was one of the deputation of 1906 which waited on Lord Minto and we then put our case. I have got the reference.

Continuing Sir John Simon said : In Bombay four additional seats were reserved for Moslems to be returned by the Moslems of the whole province. It was in addition to the right of Muslims to contest seats in joint electorates and to exercise their votes.

Dr. Suhrawardy : In Bengal we had five seats reserved like that.

Sir M. Shafi reiterated his view-point that with the introduction of election to legislatures communal representation was introduced in some parts of India simultaneously.

Replying to Dr. Narang, Sir Mahomed Shafi said : My friend asks me about the existence of the two Muslim Leagues. He knows only too well that the League split only the question of boycott of the Commission. As long as the Commission's labours are not concluded the split may continue, but as soon as the Commission's labours are over the League will be united again. We have no other material difference.

Sir M. Shafi said that Ahmediyyas also were represented in the deputation. Continuing Sir M. Shafi said that the ideal of constitutional advance which the League placed before itself was Dominion Status. Sir M. Shafi then stated his view that India should be entitled to adequate representation in the League of Nations.

Dr. Narang : Will the two communities be able to live peacefully under provincial autonomy and separate electorates ? Sir M. Shafi : Yes.

Dr. Narang then suggested that the Hindu Sabha was only a social body and Suddhi and Sangathan were planks in the social programme.

Sir M. Shafi : The Hindu Sabha is a socio-political religious body. I can supply the proceedings of the Sabha in support of the view.

Sir John Simon said he would be glad to receive a copy of the proceedings.

Sir M. Shafi advocated adult franchise for provincial legislatures, but not for the Assembly at present.

Continuing Sir M. Shafi said : I do not think communal representation will retard political advance. On the contrary it will secure fulfilment of the principle of all democratic Governments that the Legislature should be truly representative. Sir M. Shafi then said that Muslims were the predecessors of the British Rulers in India, and not the Sikhs as Dr. Narang contended was the case in the Punjab.

To Sirdar Ujjal Singh, Sir M. Shafi said that the Lucknow Pact was a political bargain between the two organisations. He refused to speculate on the possibilities of a bargain based on joint electorates.

To Sir John Simon Sir M. Shafi said that Muslims were of the opinion that under the existing conditions communal electorates were essential to secure real representation. But it might be dispensed with when the time came when the whole nation was welded together.

Sir M. Shafi then reiterated that good relations between the communities could be mentioned only with the retention of separate electorates.

To Sirdar Ujjal Singh Sir M. Shafi maintained that the Sikhs were essentially part of Hindus. To Raja Narindranath Sir M. Shafi said that he was prepared to give separate representation to Indian Christians and the Depressed Classes.

The Hon. Raja Nawab Ali Khan : Out of 26 district boards with joint electorates in how many do Muslims possess more seats than their population strength ?

Sir M. Shafi : In a few they have more seats but in the majority their representation is less than their population.

The Honble Raja Nawab Ali Khan then gave the figures of the excess representation of Muslims in Dera Ismail Khan, Mianwali, Rohtak, Gurgaon, Karnal, Hissar, Jullunder, Ferozepur, Lahore, Amritsar, etc.

Sir M. Shafi challenged the accuracy of the figures.

Dr. Narang later pointed out that these figures were taken from the Government note.

The Hon. Raja Nawab Ali Khan : Is it your view that the Muslims in the Punjab and Bengal should get representation according to population strength and in other provinces the proportion of the Lucknow Pact might be retained ?

Sir M. Shafi : I will agree to give the Hindu Minorities the same weightage which they are prepared to give to Muslim minorities.

Dr Gour : Were you a party to the Delhi Muslim proposal ?

Sir M. Shafi : I did not agree to them, as they were finally decided.

Dr. Gour : Mr. Jinnah and you agreed to joint electorates ?

Sir M. Shafi said that what transpired at the Delhi meeting in the first instance was confidential. What happened therein was contained in a leaflet.

Sir M. Shafi gave a copy of the printed leaflet to Dr. Gour.

Sir M. Shafi said the Delhi meeting was not representative.

To Dr. Gour Sir M. Shafi maintained that separate electorates were necessary to safeguard Muslim interests and to secure a truly representative Government.

To Dr. Gour, who mentioned that the scheme of panel of Muslim candidates from whom representatives might be selected by joint electorates, Sir M. Shafi said that he had not considered the proposal and could give no opinion.

Replying to Sirdar Uberoi Sir M. Shafi maintained that Sikhs and Hindus were indistinguishable.

Sirdar Uberoi : Was any Sikh elected to the Punjab Council before they were given separate electorate ? Sir M. Shafi : I think one was elected.

Sirdar Uberoi : One for the whole province ?

Replying to Dr. Suhrawardy, Sir M. Shafi said that under the Lucknow Pact Muslims in the Punjab were not getting their due share of representation. He did not object to more representation to Sikhs as long as it came out of the 45 per cent allotted to Non-Muslims and the 55 per cent representation for Muslims was left un-

touched. Continuing Sir M. Shafi said that it was true that Muslims although in majority in the Punjab were heavily indebted, and that their majority in the province was illusory. In the big riots which took place at Lahore and Rawalpindi, the Sikhs sided with the Hindus.

Sir M. Shafi repeated that he would give separate representation to Christians and Depressed Classes. The Frontier Province would be enjoying Reforms even now if it had been a separate province.

To Sir John Simon, Sir M. Shafi said that he shared the view expressed in the Montford Report that Muslims regarded separate electorate as a settled fact. It was only under separate electorates that their interests would be adequately safeguarded. He reiterated again that it was introduced with the concurrence of Gokhale, and until 1924 December no voice was raised against it.

Dr. Narang pointed out that in April 1923 opposition was raised to separate electorate.

Replying to Lord Burnham and Lord Strathcona, Sir M. Shafi said that Dyarchy had worked in the Punjab smoothly but he wanted advance all along the line both in the Provincial and Central Governments. Considering the pros and cons he was of the opinion that dyarchy should not be extended.

In conclusion, Sir M. Shafi said that if communal electorates were abolished it was their considered opinion that not only should there be no advance, but the Reforms should even be withdrawn. Muslims wanted Dominion Status only, if their rights were safeguarded. Muslims also wanted that freedom of religious worship and practice should be secured to all communities.

This concluded the evidence of Sir M. Shafi and the "Conference" rose for the day.

#### LAHORE—6th. NOVEMBER 1928

The Simon Joint Free "Conference" met half an hour earlier to dispose of to-day's witnesses in good time. A deputation of the Punjab Zamindars' Association, headed by Major D. Vanrenen, placed before the "Conference" the case of Zamindars in the Punjab.

At the outset Sir John asked Major Vanrenen whether he would prefer to be questioned or whether he would make a statement.

Major Vanrenen preferred to make a statement in the course of which he said that money-lenders were responsible, to a large extent, for the economic backwardness of the zamindars. He complained that judges did not properly administer the law with the result that cases were decided to the detriment of the agriculturists.

Sir John objected to the remark and said that he could not permit reflections of that character on the judiciary.

To Sir John, Major Vanrenen said that his association recommended the abolition of the official bloc in the Council and the widening of rural constituencies.

Q : Do you think the depressed classes should be represented by election ?

A : They should form constituencies of their own.

Q : You say that the system of competitive examination is not suitable for India. What method your association would recommend for filling the public services ?

A : By qualifying examinations.

Capt. Sikandar Hayat Khan pointed out that if the recommendations of the Zamindars' Association were carried out, the rural population would get 89 percent representation on the Council and the urban population 11 percent.

Witness said that he would change the definition of the "urban population." He would call all towns with more than 5,000 population as urban areas.

Chaudhuri Sultan Ahmed, member of the deputation, replying to Capt. Sikandar Hayat's question, said that there was no restriction on non-agricultural classes buying land in the colony areas.

Examined by Chaudhuri Chhotu Ram, Major Vanrenen said he was for the principle of 'joint responsibility' of Ministers. He did not feel any necessity of retaining representation in the Council of special interests like the Punjab University.

Q : Would you retain the present classification of constituencies into rural and urban ? A : These must remain separate.

Q : Would you like income-tax to be made a provincial subject ?

A : Certainly.

Q : Would you apply the same principle to assessment of land revenue as is applied in the case of income-tax ? A : Yes, but gradually.

To Raja Narindranath, the witness said that one of the main principles of their association was to uphold the Land Alienation Act. They had very few non-agriculturists on their association.

Raja Narindranath : You agree that the Land Alienation Act is based entirely on a caste test ? In a province which consists of peasant proprietors, don't you think the bureaucratic system is better than a democratic system ?

Witness was indistinct, but was heard to say that officials were not impartial.

Raja Narindranath : This is the first time I have heard an indictment against the impartiality of officials. What is the population of the agricultural tribes in the Punjab ? Witness : I do not know.

Q : Will you take it from me, it is little more than half the population.

Witness : No, I will take it from the book: (Laughter).

Q : If the official *bloc* is removed, your representation which is already 75 per cent, will proportionately increase and become preponderant ?

A : I think the agriculturists all over the world are sensible.

Raja Narindranath : You say, your association consists of all communities and has no communal feelings. Yet, your association is not able to decide the question of representation of minorities, and opinion, you say, is divergent on the point ?

Witness : That is my personal opinion.

Raja Narindranath further pointed out that there were middle classes among the rural agricultural classes, and among the urban agricultural classes communal feeling was predominant as also in the Punjab Council.

Sir John Simon remarked it was agreed that there was a good deal of communal feeling in the country. Was that the point the Raja wished to make ?

The Raja replied that he wished to show that there were many lines of divisions in the Punjab, more than in any other province, and yet the witness wanted to advance forward.

Sir John Simon : One cannot use cross-examination for persuading witnesses.

Major Vanrenen further told the Raja that he wished the services were manned by agriculturists to the extent of 80 per cent, it being their population strength.

Dr. Narang : Are you a member of an agricultural tribe ?

Witness : Not of the scheduled tribes.

Q : Would you not extend the same privilege that applies to you to those who are agriculturists by profession ? Witness : That will give them a chance to overcome the Land Alienation Act while we stand for this Act.

Dr. Narang : You want to restrict this privilege to men like yourself and not extend it to Punjabis ? Major Venrenon did not reply.

Further examined by Dr. Narang, the witness said the association contained big landlords and tillers of the soil. The latter formed a very large proportion. He would agree to a graduated system of land revenue.

Q : You say you want separate electorates for Zemindars as such. Is it consistent with the interests of various communities holding different religions to have jointly a separate electorate as zemindars ? Witness : Yes, it is.

Dr. Narang further mentioned that the zemindars at present had 50 out of the 70 elected *setas* showed that their influence was more potent than the influence of money-lenders. Witness : In general constituencies, yes.

Mr. Qwen Roberts pointed out that the Country League to whose memorandum the witness was a signatory had opposed widening of the franchise, while the Zamindars' Association, Punjab, had urged extension. Was it that in this matter, the Punjab Zamindars dissociated themselves from the Country League's proposition which applied to the whole of India ? Witness : That is so.

Sir H. S. Gour : Zamindars are people who easily fall a prey into the hands of money-lenders and you want the usury law to be extended to them as a class ?

Witness : That is so.

Q : When these people come into the legislatures, how will they manage other people's affairs when they cannot manage their own ?

Witness : All are not ignorant and illiterate.

Sir H. S. Gour : Yet you don't believe in freedom of contract ?

Sir John Simon : Even in England the Money Lenders' bill is an undoubted interference with free contract.

Witness : Zemindars require some protection in financial matters.

Sir H. S. Gour : Would not you let the zemindar have unfettered choice of selecting the best man for the legislature ?

Witness : Zemindars are forced to make a selection.

Sir H. S. Gour : Then they are devoid of judgment. Witness : They are subject to influences both of money lenders and officials.

Sir H. S. Gour wanted the witness to define what was meant by "stake in the country" but did not press as the witness did not answer.

Sir John Simon said that the view of the witness was that agriculturists being 80 per cent should have preponderance of authority.

Sir H. S. Gour : Do you recognise that the central and provincial legislatures should have the best brains ? The witness : No ; we want men of average intelligence.

### Sikh Deputation's Evidence

The Sikh deputation was headed by Sir Sundar Singh Majithia and included Professor Jodh Singh, Sirdar Man Singh, Lieut. S. Ragbir Singh, Sirdar Mohan Singh, Sirdar Tej Singh and Capt. Lakhan Singh.

Sirdar Ujjal Singh conducted the main examination. He observed : Yesterday it was stated that the Sikhs were not a distinct community and were part and parcel of the Hindus. Is that true ?

Sir Sundar Singh replied : Whatever the rival community might say, facts are facts namely, that throughout the Sikhs have been a distinct community. Their interests are not identical in religious or social matters with the interests of any other community and in the Punjab Council they, for instance, voted with Muslim members on the Money-lenders Bill and on a number of other matters. I myself was returned to the pr -Reform Council by Muslim help, the understanding being that there should be one Sikh.

Sir John Simon said that facts regarding the Sikhs were recorded clearly in the Montford Report, and they need not hold a historical discussion on the facts recorded in the Montford report.

Sir Sundar Singh : Even the Nehru Report has considered us a distinct community.

Sirdar Ujjal Singh : Can the party system be developed on communal electorates ? Witness : Parties in the Council have been on communal lines and so long as separate electorates exist the party system is not possible.

Further examined, he said if separate electorates remained, he would not extend them to local bodies where he would experiment with joint electorates. He did not see how the Chief Minister could select his ministry if the council was formed on a communal basis and all communities were to be represented on the Cabinet.

Sirdar Ujjal Singh asked the opinion of the witness on the claim of the minority to have representation on a population basis.

Witness : The majority want practically to have the statutory right to govern the country. The Sikhs were the rulers of the Punjab before the British and did not give up the Punjab without struggle. Do you expect we shall let ourselves be subordinated to any community's rule ?

Chaudhuri Zafarullah : You would like to rule ?

Witness : We want the rule of all communities jointly.

Sirdar Ujjal Singh : You will call the rule of one community as communal raj and not Swaraj. Witness : It will be a curious Swaraj.

Sardar Ujjal Singh's further question regarding the position of Sikhs was answered by Professor Jodh Singh who said that the Muslim Minister had in the teeth of Sikh opposition passed the Gurdwara Bill with the help of Muslim votes and another instance was that the Sikhs as voters in the local bodies were larger in proportion to their population, and yet the Muslim Minister sent round a circular asking cons-

tituencies to be so arranged as to neutralize the effect of this voting advantage and secure a majority for Muslims. These were glaring instances.

Explaining to the President the position of his community in regard to communal representation Sirdar Jodh Singh said if the principle of communal representation was entirely removed from the constitutional structure of British India, then the Sikh community was prepared to abandon separate electorates for Sikhs in the Punjab.

Sir Sunder Singh Majithia recommended for his community, in case of retention of the communal principle, thirty per cent representation in the council and local bodies and thirty per cent representation for Hindus and forty per cent for Muslims. "My reasons for recommending this", he said "are first of all we are only in the Punjab, and as such we have everything, our hearths and homes in the Punjab and in this place we should not be placed in any detrimental position. We have not the satisfaction of being in a majority in other provinces. We are a military community and have fought battles for the Empire and have sacrificed for the upkeep of the Government. Our community's strength in the past has been nearly one-sixth of the whole population. We pay in the Punjab something like 40 per cent of the canal and land revenues."

Proceeding, Sir Sunder Singh said representation in excess of the population strength was not unknown in India. In Bihar and Orissa, although the Muslim population was 10 per cent of the whole population they had 20.4 per cent representation. Witness did not wish the provinces to be constituted as independent sovereign States. As an ex-Member of the Governor's Executive Council he stated dyarchy had worked fairly satisfactorily in the Punjab.

Chaudhuri Zafarullah asked the witness what he would do in those provinces where there were only two communities, one in a majority and the other in a minority.

The witness replied that in those cases the majority would remain a majority, but the minority community would have a majority in another province, and thus there would be balance of power.

Q : You say franchise should continue on the same basis as at present. Is it due to the fact that the voting power of the Sikhs will be lowered if the franchise is extended? A : No : The widening of the franchise will lead to difficulties in elections.

Sirdar Jodh Singh said their experience Gurdwara legislation had shown that universalisation of the franchise would not increase the percentage of voters. Increase would come about when the standard of education was increased.

Proceeding Sirdar Jodh Singh said they wished to have a system of proportional representation on the single transferable vote in local bodies. There should be a second chamber in the provinces. A minimum efficiency qualification should be fixed, and the Provincial Public Services Commission should see that proportionate representation was maintained in the services.

Dr. Gokulchand Narang asked whether bloodshed would result on the introduction of joint electorates.

Sir Sunder Singh : No. Have a trial in local bodies and if the system succeeds there, try it in other spheres.

Sirdar Jodh Singh, replying to another question, said at present Muslims had an effective majority in the council. The Hindus were divided into three groups.

The Chairman at this stage said it was depressing for those who wished to study Indian politics to find that among Indians much interest was taken in communal disputes.

Dr. Narang said his object in discussing the communal questions was to expose them and to show how ridiculous and disastrous in character communalism was.

Dr. Suhrawardy drew attention to the deputationists that Sikhs had joined the Muslims in the Council on various occasions, and that their complaint of the standing tyranny of the Muslim majority. He asked : Is it not a fact that with the help of the official bloc you were defeated? Sirdar Jodh Singh : I doubt.

Later Sirdar Jodh Singh said if the Sikhs succeeded in getting special representation, they would not mind if Muslims got special representation in the other provinces where they were in a minority.

Dr. Gour (to Sir Sunder Singh) : Do you think since the introduction of communal representation communal tension has grown? A : It has grown.

Witness asked the Chairman whether the question was put to him in his capacity as ex-Member of the Governor's Executive Council in which case he would not express any opinion.—The Chairman said it was put to the witness in his capacity as a gentleman who studied politics.

Dr. Gour : How far in your opinion the introduction of separate electorates has contributed to the growing tension between the various communities?

A : They have accentuated the tension.

Q : Is the growth of communal representation in the services conducive to the growth of inefficiency in the services? Witness : Yes.

Proceeding, the witness replied that if the communal principle was altogether removed from every sphere of administration in India, the Sikhs were prepared not to urge representation in the service, but would stand on their own legs.

Replying to Sir Zulfikar Ali Khan's question, the witness said that serious communal riots within the last seven or eight years had been caused on account of communalism.

After lunch, Sir John Simon said difficulties in the Punjab connected with communalism were increased by the existence of the important Sikh community. He said figures showed that Sikhs were 11 per cent of the population, 24 per cent of the voters and wanted 30 per cent seats in the Council. The Mahomedans were 55 per cent of the population and 43 per cent of the voters and the Sikhs would give them 40 per cent of the seats. The Hindus were 33 per cent of the population, 32 per cent of the voters, and the Sikhs would allot them 30 per cent of the seats. Thus, while the Hindus practically got what they were entitled to both on population and voting strength, the Sikhs would benefit at the expense of the Muslim community.

Sir Sunder Singh said he had reduced the Hindus' seats also by 3 per cent, but as they happened to be a minority, the Sikhs had to get seats from the majority.

Sir John Simon : I am only making an elementary mathematical observation.

Witness : The Sikh problem is confined to the Punjab only and owing to our special position, we want special consideration.

Sir John Simon : I appreciate the special importance of the Sikh community, but according to your proposal, if you add the Hindu and Sikh seats, they will have more seats than the Mahomedans.

Witness informed Sir John Simon that one of the main reasons why the Sikhs, though they were only 11 per cent of the population, had among them 24 per cent of the voters, was that in the rural districts Sikhs were occupiers of more land than members of any other community.

Sir John Simon said the witness had complained that the constituencies for district boards had been arranged by the Muslim Minister to their detriment but membership of boards showed that there were 186 Sikh members against the 141 seats. They would be entitled to get according to the formula, which showed that the Sikhs had been able to hold their own and won these seats probably at the expense of the Hindus.—Witness replied that Sikhs were strong in the central districts. Hindus had not large landed interests like Sikhs.

Sir John Simon said the witness had told Sir H. S. Gour that communal representation had contributed to the communal riots. He did not wish to pursue the matter as the communal argument could not occupy the whole of political and public interest ; but he wished to ask certain questions.

Q : Do you think riots were due to the reason given by you to Sir H. S. Gour, or do you think the position was that in previous times when the prospect of more rapid advance to self-government seemed very distant, the different communities were less zealous to try and get full political representation? Do you think that, now that in recent years the prospect has opened out of constitutional and responsible advance, the different communities are becoming increasingly eager, so to say, to improve their position before the later stages are reached ; or is there nothing in that?

Witness : It may be so, because previously the Government was carried on by officials.

Sir John Simon : The opportunity for influencing political action now is more?

Witness : Also for getting representation in the services.

Sir John Simon : You mean that through adequate representation in the legislature you are able to put pressure to secure adequate representation in the services and so the wheel goes round and round ? Witness : We cannot drive away from our mind that we were rulers before the British, and cannot be relegated to the position of dependence on a majority community.

Sir John Simon further pointed out that it was striking that yesterday morning the Hindu deputation was opposed to constitutional advance if communal representation was not abolished all over India, and Sir Mahomed Shafi in the afternoon powerfully and emphatically demanded that joint electorate be not substituted for separate electorates, while the Sikh deputation was opposed to radical advance without the removal of the circumscribing adverse conditions. What were these conditions ? Sir John Simon continued : Don't you think every community in this province must realise and do its utmost (I make this suggestion with the greatest humility) to cultivate the spirit of give and take ?—Witness : That is what we want, but it must not be to deprive the Sikhs of their legitimate rights.

Examined by Lord Burnham, the witness said that the Sikh deputation arrived late in England and the Selbourne Committee regretted that they could not reopen the matter at that stage.

Q : You mean to go again to England ?

A : Certainly, we must press our claim before the Parliamentary Committee.

Major Attlee was informed by the witness that they wanted Governors to be appointed to all provinces from England, and later on from this country itself.

Major Attlee said he could not understand how they reconcile their plan of representative Government with the suggestion that Ministers be selected not from the party having the largest following, but from opposition quarters as well. How then could joint responsibility be ensured ?

Professor Jodh Singh replied that they had advocated the abolition of separate electorates throughout the country. But if this was not done, then the Council should be elected on communal basis. How could men be selected to form a Ministry and represent the interests of all communities when they were elected by one community and not as the representative of the general body of citizens ? They must have members from various communities, and ask them to work as Ministers in a spirit of compromise.

Major Attlee remarked that he only wanted to emphasise the question of Parliamentary machinery.

Witness told Lord Strathcona that they did not favour the handing over of Law and Order to the provinces.

After the deputation withdrew, Sir John Simon observed that he forgot to mention that according to revenue figures, 50 per cent of the land revenue in the Punjab was paid by Muslims, 23 per cent by Hindus and 26 per cent by the Sikhs.

#### National Unionist Parties' Evidence.

Rai Sahib Chotturam, member of the Punjab Committee, went into the witness box to lead the deputation from the National Unionist Party of the Punjab Council, otherwise known as the "Ministerial Party."

Examined by Sir John Simon, he said the party was open to all castes and creeds, so long as their programme was accepted. It had 5 Hindus and one Sikh member. Though Muslims were in a majority, there was nothing to prevent Non-Muslims being in a majority. Its policy was to advance the interest of the backward areas. He told Sir John Simon that no one could be a member of their party and at the same time a member of another party in the Council.

Explaining their chief demands one by one, Chaudhuri Chotturam said that they wanted provincial autonomy. Residuary powers should rest with the Provincial Government and the official *bloc* at least as a voting factor should be removed.

Sir John Simon remarked that a great many people seemed to attach enormous importance to residuary powers ; while on the other hand the point to settle at this stage was one of the principle of the constitution.

Witness replied that if residuary powers were to be given these should be left with the Provincial Government.



Continuing, Chaudhuri Chotturam said they wanted collective responsibility for Ministers. Distribution of subjects between the Central and Provincial Governments should be such as to enable the Provincial Government to redistribute and readjust the present burden of taxation in a fair and reasonable manner.

Sir John Simon : Are you complaining against the present situation or enunciating a principle for the future : Witness : The latter.

Sir John Simon : I understand that you want such powers in financial matters as would enable the council to adjust the burden in rural interests for instance.

Witness : That is so.

Continuing Chaudri Chotturam said that at present the Provincial Government could not change the principle applied to land revenue assessment, while his party would like to see it correspond to the income-tax assessment. The Government of India would not allow any change.

Sir John Simon : Your view is that in future the Punjab Council which would no doubt contain a preponderant rural element and would have a Ministry responsible to the House should have the power to reduce or increase land revenue assessment. And when members are predominantly rural, do you think it likely that such a council would support reduction of land revenue or encourage constant remission ?

Witness : Our past record shows that we will be reasonable.

Sir John Simon : You think it will make no material difference if the person responsible for land revenue, instead of being an irremovable Executive Councillor, were a Minister belonging to the party directly responsible to the House ?

Witness : It won't make any difference. I expect in the course of the next forty years that the basis of land revenue would be changed to correspond ultimately to income-tax. Chaudri Chotturam proceeding stated that there should be nothing in the constitution barring the Provincial Legislature from passing an economic measure like the Land Alienation Act and any measure which might be necessary in future to protect any section of the population whether urban or rural.

Sir John Simon : Do you think any cross-examination would change your view on that ? (Laughter.)—Witness : Yes, if I am convinced.

Finally, on the question of franchise the witness advocated lowering it both in the case of the land-owner and tenant to a payment of Rs. 10 land revenue or the occupation of land assessable to a land revenue of Rs. 10.

Lord Burnham : Your proposal to assimilate land revenue to incometax would mean that land revenue would be a tax on the profits of agriculture ? Witness : Yes.

Raja Narendranath remarked that the witness wanted a larger power of taxation. He had stated that any person could join his party, but was it not a fact that the real pivot on which the programme hung was the Land Alienation Act for which the Unionist Party stood ? How could others join the party ?

Witness : We also say that the basis of taxation should be changed.

Sir John Simon : You say it should be changed in an equitable and fair manner to which everyone could subscribe. (Laughter.)

Raja Narendranath asked the witness how the urban party approximated to capitalists, and the rural to the Labour Party when the Unionist Party consisted only of members of agricultural tribes who would not include agricultural labourers who depended on daily wages ?—Witness : All peasants are labourers.

Raja Narendranath pointed out that though the Central Legislature had power to repeal local Acts, the Land Alienation Act was not repealed. Was not the then existing guarantee quite enough ?—Witness thought it might suit. To Raja Narendranath, witness replied that he wanted more, namely, statutory provision preventing such legislation by any legislature.

Dr. Narang : You want the provincial Government to be so independent of the central Government as to have no power of control or direction ?

Witness : Yes. In all matters except those reacting on the sphere of the central or other provincial Governments.

Dr. Narang : You would like to give them greater autonomy than Indian States are enjoying at present ?—Witness : It is difficult for me to say that.

Sir John Simon : I am obliged to Dr. Narang for bringing the point out. In constitutional structures, this distribution of powers sometimes takes one form, and sometimes another. In some constitutions like that of South Africa, the

Central Legislature has an overriding power. That is, strictly speaking, not a federation at all. Another instance is of the Imperial Parliament technically possessing the power to repeal acts passed by a subordinate Parliament. The Government of India Act is constructed on that principle, and the Central Legislature can repeal laws in force in any part of British India. The second class of cases is where you dole out power so much for the Central Government and so much for the provinces and the powers exercised by one authority cannot be exercised by another. The case of Canada is very nearly that. The next question is when you have distributed all power, what about the unnamed powers? In some instances these rest in the centre and in some with the provinces. But all this is a matter of structure at the last stage. The first thing we must settle is whether the right principle is the principle by which the Central Legislature has overriding power or whether it is one in which there is distribution of powers.

Dr. Narang, resuming, asked the witness what safeguards he provided against misuse by majority and of abuse of power.

Witness : The Governor can dissolve the Council.

Sir John Simon intervening asked the witness to take the case where a dangerous situation had developed, and the Provincial Government wanted the assistance of the military which according to the witness, was to be in the charge of the Central Government. If there was a rigid distribution of powers and provinces were made absolutely self-contained how would the Central Government intervene? These points must be considered in constituting-building.—Witness said that they would have to apply to the Central Government for military assistance.

Chaudri Chhoturam told Dr. Narang that he would abolish the Governor-General's veto in respect of provincial legislation and keep only the Governor's veto.

Dr. Narang next pointed out that Chaudhri Lalchand, ex-Minister, had advocated joint electorates with reservation of seats. Witness disagreed, and said that that could be adopted only by general agreement between the communities themselves.

Dr. Narang next pointed out that the proceedings of the Council showed that they in the Punjab had gone far beyond the communal question, as they had advocated sectional preference, caste preference, and even territorial preference.

Dr. Narang asked whether these were cleavage on a communal basis?

Witness did not agree.

Dr. Narang next pointed out that the memorandum of the party consisted of men of rural extraction, and that there was an unending conflict of views between them and the other party in the Council. Dr. Narang pointed out that if they had Ministers responsible to the House the majority, namely, the party of the witness must rule, and this party had a never-ending conflict with the other party, which meant that the majority could when in power, tyrannise over the minority. What safeguard would he give to the minority, to protect itself from tyranny?

Witness : The Council can revolt against them if they indulged in tyranny, and they would not be elected next time. There is in addition the Governor's power to dissolve the Council.

Dr. Narang asked why they wanted power? Was it because of the tyranny of the existing rule, or because of their desire to apply the principle of self-determination? If they would not give safeguards for minorities, then the present rule was good enough. Witness did not think the argument held good.

Dr. Narang said the witness did not want the Central Legislature to interfere with such a measure as the Land Alienation Act. But would he call it an economic measure when its application depended on exigencies of birth and no one not born as such, could become a member of an agricultural tribe?

Witness replied that economic measure was one which would safeguard the economic interests of a section of population which was backward, and could not look after their own interests without help.

Sir John Simon brought this controversy to a close by remarking that they thoroughly understood the pros and cons of this matter.

Examined by Chaudhri Zafarullah, Chaudhri Chhoturam stated that to the Central Government could be assigned control of foreign affairs, Indian States, customs, railways, posts and telegraphs, etc.

Sir Hari Singh Gour : You want assessment of land revenue on the principle

on which income-tax is assessed ? In other words, you want the establishment of freeholds in the Punjab ?—Witness agreed.

Replying to Sir Arthur Froom's question, Chaudri Chotturam said that in the matter of raising provincial loans, there should be some sort of understanding between the Central and Provincial Governments.

Sir Arthur Froom said it was essential in order to avoid any two provinces trying to raise loans simultaneously, and thus spoiling each other's chances.

### Military Classes' Deputation.

The deputation of the martial races in the Punjab headed by Sir Umar Hayat Khan next presented their case to the Commission.

Sir Umar briefly stated their case. He said that no less than 480,000 members of martial races went to War from the Punjab. ( Sir John : that is a wonderful record.) But when the reforms were given to the country, they were forgotten. They wanted at least 25 seats in the Punjab Council.

Sir John : One of the members of the Punjab Reforms Committee is an ex-army officer ?—Sir Umar : He is not here as our representative. He is representing the landowners.

Sir John : Do you want a separate constituency for every occupation as well as religion ?—Sir Umar : In combined constituencies we might get one or two seats ; but they are inadequate.

All the members of the Punjab Martial Classes' deputation then withdrew except Sir Umar Hayat Khan, who led the next deputation of the Punjab Chiefs' Association. The short time which was spent in calling the other members of this deputation was spent in the examination of Sir Umar Hayat Khan on the memorandum which he had submitted in his personal capacity.

Sir John asked him to make a statement on his memorandum. Sir Umar Hayat Khan said that in the olden days friends and loyal subjects of kings were admitted to high positions ; but the British Government invited every one through election with the result that the Government was always defeated. For the smooth carrying on of Government, therefore, some friends of the Government should be admitted to the Councils. In the present legislatures, the friends of the Government had no place. Their number would go on diminishing.

Sir John said it was true that in the Central Legislature there was a tendency for critics to be numerous and for supporters of the administration to be small in number.

Witness urged that both in the Central and Provincial Governments there should be second chambers so that mistakes made in the lower houses might be rectified.

### Punjab Chiefs' Case.]

Sir Umar Hayat Khan and Sardar Mohan Singh acted as spokesmen of the Punjab Chiefs' Association. Sir Umar Hayat said that there were about 500 members of the Association who were big landholders, having thus a great stake in the province. Their principle was to stand or fall with the British Government. They felt that their big properties would suffer if anything happened to the Government. "We are friends of the administration whatever administration there may be," said Sir Umar, (Laughter) Sir Umar complained that they were not getting their due share in the administration. Previously, their sons used to get high positions in the services, but during the last two or three years this had been made difficult. Experience had shown that their sons proved better than the ordinary B.A.'s because they possessed administrative qualifications.

Sir John said that there might be another view taken of great families, that as they possessed land, influence and leadership, they could seek election through ordinary constituencies.

Sir Umar Hayat Khan said if they were given three seats in the provincial and one in each of the central legislatures, they would be satisfied.

Examined by Dr. Narang, Sir Umar stated that the Army career was thrown open to every body. He cited the case of the Bengali Regiment which proved a failure.

Dr. Narang asked him whether he would allow the non-martial classes to improve gradually ?—Witness : Directly you bring in the wrong class you weaken the Army.

Sir Umar agreed that if members of the Chiefs' Association were divided among constituencies of the Punjab, there would be ten of them at least per constituency.

Dr. Narang : At the elections you have ten aristocrats. Therefore, the poor money-lender does not count at all.

A : Probably, every one of those ten is heavily in debt.

This finished to-day's examination and the Conference rose at 6 p.m.

#### LAHORE—8th NOVEMBER 1928

Having recorded what would perhaps rank as the most conflicting controversial evidence on a given subject in any part of India the Simon Joint Free Conference were able, to-day, to divert attention from non-official to official evidence.

To-day's evidence was confined in the morning to the Executive Councillors, Sir Fazli Hussain and Mr. Stow, and in the afternoon, to the three Ministers. But while the Executive Councillors were examined together, the three Ministers were heard one by one as they had sent in separate notes.

#### Depressed Classes' Deputation.

Before the Conference met, a contingent of 500 members of the depressed classes' men from various parts of the Punjab, had arrived—all red-turbaned and dressed in white—and wished to meet Sir John Simon. Sir John's time being fully occupied, he was unable to witness the demonstration but received a small deputation of six of them led by Mr. Rajah.

Sir John Simon received the deputation's address and assured them that though he could not hear them publicly, he was giving his best consideration to their case and that Mr. Rajah was there giving all the facts and figures and devotedly representing the cause of the depressed classes.

The depressed classes deputation, said in the course of their memorial that they belonged to an ancient race which ruled India about 5,000 years ago, prior to the invasion of India by the Aryans. The Aryans, whose present descendants were called high class Hindus, had all along been treating them with the most inhuman brutality, so that their unlucky community, numerically large as it was, is now little more than a mere name. In spite of the fact that there were some highly-educated and capable men in their community, they were not given any honourable status in society nor the right of ownership or anything. They had not even the right to safeguard their individual lives.

This deplorable condition of the mute millions of the depressed community was due to the horrible treatment meted out to them by high-class Hindus in consequence of the pronouncements of the ancient Aryans, which were embodied in the Manu Smriti and a lot of other Hindu scriptures of that ilk.

The deputationsists next stated that they did not wish to be called Hindus but 'Addharmis' and in the next census they should describe themselves as 'Addharmis.' They did not want Swaraj in India under present conditions, as it would mean practically a monopoly by caste Hindus.

They enumerated their demands as follows :—

Necessary arrangements for the better education of Addharmis (untouchable) boys and girls ; separate representation in all public bodies and the Legislature ; a share in all public services, including the police, civil and military ; a Minister in every province ; equal rights of using all District Board public wells with other communities ; equal rights of ownership of any property—dwelling houses and common fields—with other communities and proscription of the Manu Smriti and all such Hindu scriptures in which contemptuous references are made to the race and community. References to the community by the term of Shudra, the memorial urges, should be strictly forbidden. Land in the new colonies should be distributed just as it is done in the case of other communities.

#### Lala Harkishenlal's Evidence.

After this function the Conference met and examined Sir Fazli Hussain and Mr. Stow. The examination was in camera. The Conference next heard Lala Harkishan Lal who was the first Minister of Agriculture under the Reforms.

Sir John Simon : What is your view of the working of dyarchy ; has it been

successful or unsuccessful?—Witness : Well, Sir, there was no dyarchy. It was no dyarchy ; it was a quadrarchy or unitary government.

Sir John Simon : You don't want me to adopt that word (laughter) ; but whether it was a four-footed thing or single footed thing, do you consider it worked ?

A : It worked, I should say, to a large extent.

Sir John Simon : I put a leading question though it is a bad thing to do. Do you think the influence and help which the Governor gave in this province was of assistance in making it work?—Witness : I think the Governor's attitude was very helpful, and so was the attitude of the people who had to work it.

Sir John Simon : There has not been, we are glad to find, in this province, a constant succession of votes of censure on Ministers ?

Witness : One was tried, and it failed.

Sir John Simon : Is it legitimate, to ask you in a very plain way, as to what in your view should be done now ?

Witness : The King Emperor in 1918 said he would like to see India work to full responsible government and it was said in the despatches that the present concession was a substantial instalment. Well, so far as the provinces are concerned, I think a second instalment ought to be fully paid and the debt liquidated ; while so far as the Government of India is concerned, I should fix up one instalment now, and one later.

Sir John Simon : Your view is that speaking with experience of the province, the time has come to take a step forward in this province to go to the full length of provincial autonomy—A : To be definite, it should not be power in the hands of the Governor, for that would also be autonomy, but I want power in the hands of Ministers.

Sir John Simon : Would you be in favour of extending the powers of the Governor in regard to veto, supposing autonomy were granted ?

Witness : No, because autonomy would mean joint responsibility of the Ministers. I would not accept the Governor's powers of overruling the Cabinet except in exceptional cases.

Mr. Cadogan : What would those exceptional cases be ?

Witness : Times of trouble, turmoil and disorder. When there is a war the Government of India would dictate terms. Col. Lane-Fox. Would you like to see law and order transferred to Ministers ? Several witnesses have suggested against such a course when there is a strong majority of one community.

Witness : The Minister under the present system does not have to deal with the matter. He cannot dictate anything to the police in the early stages of an enquiry. There may be some influence exercised. When I was Minister, we found these matters rested with the subordinate magistracy and the police.

Col. Lane-Fox : Anyhow, you are not afraid?—Witness : I am not.

Dr. Narang : You think all these wrangles about communalism will disappear ?

Witness : Is there trouble now ?

Captain Sikandar Hayat Khan : Are you in favour of extension of franchise to tenants?—Witness : Yes.

Q : You are not in favour of adult suffrage ?

A : I am in theory, but for the sake of management, I will begin by a property qualification and gradually work up to adult suffrage.

Q : Would you like an automatic provision in the constitution to secure ultimately adult suffrage ?

Witness : Yes, if sufficient time is fixed, otherwise as the Council sees fit.

Sirdar Ujjal Singh : Will you have separate communal electorate ?

Witness : No, I will have joint electorate.

Q : Under provincial autonomy, should we give control to the Central Government such as retaining the Governor General's vote ?

Witness replied that this point required detailed examination. In some cases this vote would be necessary, but he would reduce it to a minimum.

Sardar Ujjal Singh : Supposing separate electorates are kept alive in the Council, would you like them to be extended to local bodies ?

Witness : As I told the Muddiman Committee, I won't kick at it, but I would remove it even from the local Council.

Chaudri Chotturam : Did you get on well with your colleague ?

Witness : Very well. I was dining with him three nights a week. (Laughter).

Q : What about the Secretaries ?

Witness : With the secretaries, I got on well except with one head of department.

Q : Was there any friction ?

Witness : Absolutely none except difference of opinion.

Sir John Simon : Most people have differences of opinion. We have also in this conference. (Laughter). Sir John Simon suggested that questions be restricted to the constitutional points involved.

Sir H. S. Gour : Why do you oppose communal electorates ?

Witness : The chief reason is that responsible government and communal electorates are a negation of each other. There cannot be any responsible government based on political views if people are divided and the members of Council are divided on religious grounds.

Sir H. S. Gour : Is the answer based on theoretical or practical grounds ? Did you find as Minister that the decisions of the Council were affected by communal considerations ?

Witness : Sometime, not always.

Sir H. S. Gour : Under general electorates would you give reservation of seats ?

Witness : No reservation of seats.

Q : You will leave the minorities to work out their own salvation ?

Witness : The minorities are created. There are no minorities. They have been created on the basis of religion or economic ideas. From the political point of view there are no minorities and majorities.

Sir H. S. Gour : There are people not so politically minded. For instance, are the depressed classes likely to have a representative returned ?

Witness : I stand for adult suffrage. They can come in through the general electorates.

Q : Do you think under adult suffrage the same class of intellectual men would come into the councils ?

Witness : I do not know of a higher standard in this country. We have the best men nowadays, and that standard would be maintained.

Sir H. S. Gour : Would busy people like you care to contest such constituencies ?

Witness : It all depends on the strength of the Council. I would like the membership to be 200.

Sir Arthur Froom : You are a big banker. Your view would be valuable. Would you have the Finance Department of the Punjab entirely separate from the Central Government ?

Witness : In ordinary cases, the provinces should be allowed to borrow independently ; but in the case of a stringency, the Government of India might be consulted.

Sir Arthur Froom : Supposing there was independence, you will have eight provinces bringing out a loan at the same time.

Witness : We find every day that the Imperial Bank tries to beat us and we are trying to escape that. Where the Imperial Bank lends at 6 per cent, we cannot afford to. I do believe the Finance Department would be wise enough to see the resources of the country. I do not fear they will cut each other's throats.

Sir Arthur Froom : The question is bigger. The fear is that without central control there might be a race to be in the field first.

Witness : In the London money market, people who are not really active have to wait with good schemes ; while others more active get financed quickly. There is no suggestion that there should be central control over the London Money Market.

Sir Arthur Froom : I do not quite agree that the cases are alike. What about the rate of interest ?

Witness : That would depend upon the internal resource of the province. At present, the Government of India cannot do equitable service to the provinces and the Government of India's requirements have preference.

Sir Arthur Froom : Provincial loans are raised on the security of the Government of India.

Sir John Simon intervening pointed out that provincial governments may raise loans on the security of the provincial finances if allowed by the Government and that in the Punjab this had been done in two cases.

Sir John Simon : I feel some difficulty in this matter. In London the different departments of state cannot go into the London Money Market without going through the Treasury.

Witness : Local bodies in England can borrow independently of the Treasury. The Provincial Governments here would correspond to the local bodies in England for this purpose. Then again there are already port trusts, improvement trusts, and municipal corporations borrowing in the market independently of the Government of India.

Sir John Simon : Your point is, if there are 9 or 10 provinces in India and also the Central Government, the whole system being federal, you think each provincial unit should be free to raise its money by a loan without any co-ordination by the Government of India ? Witness : Theoretically it is possible, but in practice just as bankers put their heads together, the provinces may have to put their heads under the guidance of India.

Sir Arthur Froom : What I want to ask the witness is whether without co-ordination he will not find that he will have to pay more for his money.

Witness : Possibly yes. We may have to pay more.

Sir John Simon thanked the witness who then withdrew. This finished the Commission's Lahore programme and it left for Karachi the same evening.

#### *KARACHI—11TH. NOVEMBER 1928.*

The Simon Commission arrived at Karachi on the 11th November at 7-20 in the morning and were welcomed by Mr. Hudson, Commissioner of Sind, who introduced them to the leading officials and non-officials.

The arrival of the train was the signal for shouts of "Go back" and "shame" from a large crowd of demonstrators who had assembled out-side the station and were lining the road both sides. The processionists had organized themselves early at five in the morning, and passed through the streets of the town demonstrating against the Commission. The crowd did not disperse till the Central Committee special also arrived and all the members had passed along the route, when the crowd again shouted "Go back" and "shame." The demonstrators had black flags and were orderly.

#### *Commission Opens Sitzings.*

The members of the Simon Joint Free Conference entered on their task on the next day, the 12th. November, armed not only with the study of documents, but also with a knowledge of its problems as gained by informal conversations over the dinner table last night at the Government House.

The memoranda submitted by both the Sind Mahomedan and the Sind Hindu Associations were diametrically opposed. Communal differences between these two associations reflected the intensity of differences shown at Lahore among the Muslim and Hindu deputations who appeared before the Conference.

Sir John Simon asked Mr. Khurho, leader of the Sind Mahomedan Association's deputation, to make a statement of his main demands. Mr. Khurho said they wanted Sind to be separated from the Bombay Presidency and be constituted into a separate, autonomous province. They wanted separate electorates for all bodies depending on elections.

Sir John Simon : You want separate electorates. But supposing Sind is made a separate province, will you reserve the question whether there should be a separate electorate or not for later consideration, as you are  $2\frac{1}{2}$  out of a  $3\frac{1}{4}$  million population. A :—No, we find that though we are in a majority on the population basis the Hindu voting strength is larger than ours.

Sir John Simon had the figures gone into by Mr. Stewart, the Conference Secretary, the result of which was that non-Mohammedan (mainly Hindu) voters were found to be 67,000 against 59,000 Moslem voters.

Sir John Simon commented : The figures are very striking, as the Moslem population is two and a half millions, out of a total population of three and a quarter ; so it really comes to this that three Hindu members of the Council have got a more popular constituency than 14 Mohammedan members, who have 59,000 constituents as against the Hindus' 67,000.

The witness, continuing, mentioned that, owing to the fact that Moslems are backward and illiterate they are under the influence of Hindu *banias* and money-lenders particularly in the mofussil area and that as the Public Services are dominated by Hindu officials who influence voters, separate electorates alone would safeguard Moslem interests. They wanted for Moslems a share in the Services proportionate to their population strength and wanted educational grants to remove illiteracy to be statutorily made a first charge on the provincial revenues.

They wanted that wherever Moslems were in a minority they should be given one-third representation in the legislature, and in Bengal and the Punjab they should have representation on a population basis. He further urged that there should be proper Moslem representation in future cabinets.

Sir John Simon remarked that these were general questions applicable to other parts and need not be gone into detail here. He asked whether witness would be prepared to extend to other minorities the same safeguards he advocated for the Moslems. The witness replied in the affirmative but pointed out that the present proposals were based on the assumption that Sind was to remain a part of Bombay. The witness further advocated a larger representation of Sind landlords, who should have two seats instead of one seat in the Bombay Council.

Asked whether all the members of the deputation agreed with the case as presented by Mr. Khuhro, Mr. Wali Muhammad Hussanally laid emphasis on the money-lenders' influence and that of Hindu officials on the agricultural population, which under previous system of joint electorates had kept out Moslem members.

Major Attlee asked how a *bania* exercised this influence, for if the Moslems wished to support a particular candidate, the *bania* could not afford to lose all his custom by annoying Moslem clients. The witness replied that money-lenders had poor agriculturists' property mortgaged and that influence worked strongly.

Major Attlee suggested that, if the *bania* wielded such influence he could under separate electorates, too, back a person whom the witnesses might consider undesirable. Mr. Khuhro replied that the *bania* took no such interest in elections owing to these being on a communal basis. Raja Nawab Ali said that if they had adult suffrage, they ought to have a strong majority and should agree to a joint electorate.

Mr. Khuhro was personally opposed to extending the franchise to woman yet, while Mr. Hussanally said that Moslem woman could vote only under a separate electorate. Mr. Khuhro agreed with Raja Nawab Ali's suggestion that Moslems in the majority provinces should extend to the Hindus the same protection as they asked for themselves.

Sir Hari Singh Gour : According to your suggestion the backward communities must rule the advanced communities and the minorities should rule the majorities ?—It is not so.

You want separate electorates for the Moslems, the Depressed Classes, caste Hindus and non-moslems. You will take what you want and divide the rest, which belongs to the Hindus, among the various other people ?—Yes.

If *bania* influence is not strong, has there been any election petition bringing that out ?—Mr. Hussanally: It is difficult to prove that just as it is difficult to prove the existence of corruption.

If you are permanently safeguarded, won't that make your backwardness stereotyped ?—Mr. Hussanally thought that in course of time, educationally they would advance, making the existing safeguarding unnecessary.

Sir John Simon asked whether the witness suggested that there was the other point of view, that to give them encouragement would be to make them live in a protected world. For instance, industries protected by tariff walls began to rely on them. Or did the witness think that political independence would be developed by the protection they demanded ?—Mr. Hussanally replied that it would be developed.



Further questioned the witness said he did not advocate the indefinite continuance of separate electorates.

Sir John Simon : Your proposal is for the protection of minorities in the special circumstances of India. You are prepared to apply your conditions, whatever the minorities be ?—That is so.

Sir Zulfikar Ali Khan asked whether abolition of separate electorates would not make the Moslems a political nonentity and hamper their progress ?

The witness replied that that would be so.

You do not advance until safeguards for the minorities are provided by Parliament ?—We don't want autonomy then.

You want the Central Government to be invested with sufficient authority to control the provinces ?—It would be necessary that the Government should be sufficiently strong to intervene in case of emergency.

The witness urged that Law and Order should be reserved. At present this was the view of the majority of his Association. He attached greater importance to securing for the Mohammedan community an adequate share in the Public Services than to Indianization in the abstract and would oppose Indianization if it resulted in an overwhelming preponderance of one community.

The witness told Sardar Shivdev Uberoi that the question of efficiency in the Services did not mean that the minorities should not be represented. Efficiency was already suffering and would not be worse. Referring to women suffrage, he told Sardar Shivdev Uberoi that, though personally he was opposed to extending votes to women, his Association had supported it.

Mr. Hussainally added that under separate electorates women should have no difficulty in voting. The percentage of literacy in Sind was three.

Dr. Suhrawardy : You know that under the existing arrangements the Moslems are nowhere in a position to tyrannize over the minorities ?—That is absolutely correct.

But with the separation of Sind and grant of reforms to the N. W. F. Provinces the Moslem population would have a large majority in the two provinces. Would you in that case concede to the minority the privilege of one-third seats which you ask for everywhere where you are in a minority owing to your historical and political importance ?—I have no objection to that.

The witness told Mr. Bhutto that he had found no cause for communal bitterness at all owing to separate electorates.

Sir John Simon : I appreciate your point of view, but after all communal tension does not arise merely on election day. It seems that there is something to be said. I think it is quite reasonable to say on the one hand that, if the communities vote separately, there is less likely to be a conflict between the communities, but there is on the other hand the view that the system of communal electorates creates a tendency for candidates to appeal for support on the ground that he is the embodiment of the communal view thereby encouraging intensity of feeling between the one community and the other. I am not saying which way the argument goes, but we must recognize that there is an argument both ways.

Witness : Looking after the interest of either community should not create intensity of feeling.

Mr. Khuhro told Mr. Abdul Latiff that he favoured the transfer of land revenue.

Mr. Patil referring to the statement of the witness that under a joint electorate and reserve seats undesirable Moslem members would be returned, asked what he meant by "undesirable members." Did he mean those who did not agree with the communalists ?—The witness replied that he referred to those Moslems who did not hold the view held by the majority of the community.

Mr. Patil : What do the majority of the Moslems think, so far as the national view is concerned ?

A member of the deputation replied : We all want the country to progress. We want Dominion Status under British rule but Mohammedans must have an adequate share.

Mr. Khuhro, replying to Mr. Shah, stated that if adult suffrage was not granted, he would at any rate lower the rural franchise.

The Conference next took up the question of the separation of Sind.

Sir John Simon : Have you considered the financial side of the question ?

Mr. Khuhro : Figures have been made available from time to time by the Government but they are not reliable. He proceeded to quote some of the figures but Sir John Simon told him that, as these were not included in their memorandum, the Conference could not be expected to examine the deputation on them and suggested that a supplementary memorandum should be sent in.

The witness agreed to the proposal. He continued : We really want that an expert and independent committee be appointed to consider this subject.

Sir John Simon : Let us see whether the Conference is not independent and how far it is able to be expert. We have already secured expert financial assistance. Has your Association dealt with the question of the capital debt which would have to be borne by Sind in case it was separated ? There is very large capital invested, say, in the Sukkur barrage. What would you suggest should be done in equity ?

Mr. Khuhro replied that they had not considered details.

Mr. Hussanally added that so far as the financial bogey was concerned, they could not get any help from the Bombay Government or other sources, as they were all opposed to the separation of Sind.

Sir John Simon (to Mr. Hussanally) : It does not matter as to who is opposed to the proposal, you may be quite certain that, as far as we are concerned, we shall examine it fair-mindedly.—Mr. Hussanally : Distribution on a linguistic basis was conceded by the Montford Report.

Sir John Simon : You will allow me to say that the great thing is for the people working on the subject to get beneath the surface and see what it really means. There is no use saying in general terms that one is in favour of linguistic provinces. People concerned with a constitutional question have got to get below the surface and see how things would work.—Mr. Hussanally : The Government of Bombay will not help us at all. We cannot get material.

Sir John Simon asked whether, if there was a choice they would like to join Bombay or the Punjab ?—Mr. Khuhro replied that many years ago, when the question was discussed, Sind opinion favoured the Punjab, but now they wished to stand on their own feet.

Sir John Simon : Are you prepared for a reduction in the scale of expenditure in this province on nation-building services or, if you are going to improve education the province must raise its own money for education. Would you be able to raise money for education ?—We must first retrench and then face these various questions.

Viscount Burnham : Don't you think it possible, especially having regard to financial conditions, that separation be postponed for a certain number of years and that the number of years be fixed either now or later on ?—We think the time is ripe for separation.

Mr. Bhuto asked for the grounds on which the demand for separation is based.—Mr. Khuhro replied there was nothing in common between Bombay presidency and Sind, that not only were the people's languages, customs, habits and dress were different but the Bombay Government itself treated it as a distinct unit.

Sir John Simon remarked that it was admitted in actual practice for many purposes that Sind was not treated in the fullest sense as a part of Bombay Presidency proper, but as a special area.

The witness told Mr. Bhuto that if the Sukkur scheme failed then only the Bombay Presidency shared the burden.

Sir John Simon pointed out that the actual position was that money was borrowed by the Government of India on its own security and lent to the Bombay Government.

Examined by Mr. Shah, the witness stated that a number of Sind Hindus were in favour of separation.

Mr. Patil : Why are Sind Hindus opposed to separation ?—Probably they fear that the present Hindu majority in Bombay would become a majority in Sind.

But what's their fear ? The witness did not reply to the question.

Sind has been always a deficit province ?—No. I dispute the figures.

Are land-revenue, stamp and excise an expandable source ?—There are many ways of improving the finances but I cannot suggest any at the moment.

Mr. Patil : You say that the Indian National Congress supports separation. Do you accept the other views of the Congress as well as only those that are con-

venient to you? The Congress recognizes the force in the demand for the separation of Sind.

Sir Arthur Froom pointed out that if Sind was separated the Moslem position in Bombay Presidency proper would be reduced from a population of a  $3\frac{1}{4}$  million to a million only.—Mr. Hussanally replied that Bombay Moslems were with them in the demand for the separation of Sind. There was no advantage in the present position.

Sir Harisingh Gour: You quote the Nehru Report. Are you in its favour as a whole?—A: I never based our claim on the Nehru Report.

You then base it on the existence of backwardness and the need for Development? Have you considered any other alternative to achieve the same object?—No, we have not.

#### OTHER EVIDENCES

Mr. Turner, Deputy Inspector-General of Police, Sind, examined next said that Sind was for administrative purposes treated as a distinct unit. He held that with the transfer of law and order the efficiency of the police would suffer, and he therefore opposed it in the present circumstances of the country. From the point of view of the police, there would be no advantage in constituting Sind as a separate province, while there might be some disadvantages. He considered the European element in the police necessary. A fifty-fifty proportion would do.

Messrs. Graham, Wentworth, Stanley and Hossack, examined on behalf of the Karachi Chamber of Commerce, said that they were opposed to separation of Sind and pleaded that the constitutional scheme should keep out the transfer of Law and Order for the present. The scheme, he said, should be prepared in such a manner that the intervention of the Imperial Parliament should not be necessary. For the present they wanted no change in the Central Legislature. Subjects like defence and foreign relations must, in their opinion, ever remain outside the Central Government's control.

#### KARACHI—13th. NOVEMBER 1928

On this day the Simon Conference met to hear the Hindu Deputation. Sir John Simon said that the Association's memorandum dealt mainly with the question of the general position of Hindus and the separation of Sind. The Conference first examined the deputation on the former point.

Addressing the Conference Professor Chabiani said that the Sind Hindus wished to emphasise how public administration had been affected by the vicious principle of communalism, that it was necessary to provide adequate safe-guards against a repetition of this state of affairs. The Hindu Association stood for what Sir John Simon had stated "justice between man and man," but this has not been the ideal of the present administration in recent years. "We ask for no special privileges for the Hindu minority of Sind, we only ask for equality for all citizens in matters of franchise. We wish to remove the anomalies in existing practice. We want the qualification laid down for the non-agriculturist to be the same as for the agriculturist voter.

Sir John Simon: You want the income-tax qualification to be made equivalent to land revenue? What practical change do you suggest?—Witness stated that on the present basis, a man having a profit of Rs. 128 from land was a voter; similarly, a man paying income-tax on the same earning should be a voter.

Continuing Mr. Chabiani said that a general electorate alone was compatible with responsible self-government. We wish the representatives of the voters to be judged by his service to the commonweal. We wish the advanced members of a community to have the privilege and opportunity to educate backward communities in the exercise of their political power, but the reservation of seats for the minority is inconsistent with responsible government. Responsible government implies the rule of the majority, but the minorities have an opportunity to become the majority. That essential process is lacking in the present system.

We are opposed to the excessive representation of any community, be it majority or minority, but if the principle of excessive representation is adopted, it must be extended to all. We particularly want that the same number of voters, whether

Hindu or Moslem, should be entitled to return the same number of members. We favour provincial autonomy, we want the Central Government to have some reserve powers. We are in favour of progress on the ground of public welfare, and in the Central Government some element of responsibility ought to be conceded.

The services should owe allegiance to no community and no person should feel that he is a member of the service because of his community. The Public Services Commission should recruit men entirely on their merits.

Sir J. Simon asked whether witness urged the test of population or the test of votes in arranging the communal proportion.—Witness replied in favour of votes.

Sir John Simon pointed out that the Hindu voters in Sind were larger than the Moslem at present.—Witness held that the various communities were entitled to the maximum seats to their voting proportion.

Sir John Simon asked what constitutional safeguards witness advocated for minorities. Would not his suggestion for a statutory provision lead to a great deal of litigation, some of it unfounded?—We can trust to public opinion to thwart it.

Sir J. Simon ; You think public opinion would prevent any lawyer taking up the point ? ( Laughter ).

Lord Strathcona : This favouritism to the other communities against Hindus, is it done by British officials or Hindus?—Both. The position has improved in the last three years, but generally speaking the criticism applies to the present day administration.

Lord Burnham : I want to make the position clear in respect of the validity of the statutory law? Are you in favour of an appeal from the legislature to the law courts, for enforcing safeguards for minorities? In countries having a popular Government such as U. S. A., the validity of laws made by Congress or the State Legislature is challenged. Do you contemplate the protection of minorities by depending on the supremacy of the law courts over the Legislature?

Witness was indistinctly heard to agree with the suggestion.

Witness informed Mr. Lane-Fox that his proposal regarding the Public Services Commission was that in case any legislature, or administration, laid down the communal proportion over and above the open competitive test, such an act should be declared illegal and there should be power to appeal to a law court to challenge such an action by any administration.

Major Attlee said that the statement in the memorandum that the extension of the franchise would lead to rich capitalists buying more votes, implied that votes were at present bought.—Witness said that was so.

Major Attlee ; It has been stated that the Bania money-lender influences the votes.

Witness : On the other hand, the Bania is entirely at the mercy of the zamindar and without his protection could not live in the villages.

Mr. Bhutto put a series of questions challenging the statements made in the memorandum and asked how money-lenders with a little capital became so rich and named one of them.

Sir John Simon pointed out that while the position of the money-lenders in economic relation was very important, all questions should be confined to the constitutional inquiry.

Mr. Bhutto : You refer to the Larkana riots. You know that all the investigating officers were Hindus?

Witness : There was a superior Moslem officer. There was political pressure behind it. The resolution of the Mahomedan Association bore that out. The confidence of the people in the judiciary has been weakened by this case.

Sir J. Simon : We needn't go into details. That is a feeling of your community. There is a learned gentleman who said that a man's mind is as much a matter of fact as the state of his digestion.

Mr. Bhutto suggested that Hindus had prospered and held a monopoly in the services.—Witness said they did not possess land in a larger proportion than their population and did not agree that they had a monopoly of the services.

Mr. Bhutto : During the last eighty years, you prospered more than the Moslems.

Witness : That is no fault of the Hindus. We are more enterprising and better educated.

Mr. Bhutto : You say the Moslem members of the Bombay Council were bargaining with Government. What is your authority for that ?—It is a matter of common knowledge. There is a scheme of irrigation intended through a proportionate supply of water to benefit the poor agriculturist at the tail end, but while the Irrigation Department promoted scheme, big Zamindars brought pressure to bear on the powers with the result that the scheme was abandoned. If the Commission sent for the records of the case, there would be startling revelations.

Mr. Bhutto : So far as the reforms are concerned Moslem co-operation made them a success ?—Witness : Owing to the policy of the Swaraj Party, Government fell into the hands of the Moslem Party.

Mr. Bhutto : How do you say there is Mahomedanisation of the Services ?—Not one Hindu was appointed by direct recruitment as Deputy Collector.

Mr. Bhutto : But recently out of 15, ten Hindus have been appointed Sub-Inspectors of Police ?

Sir John Simon intervening pointed out that it was no use to pursue the controversy as the Professor would not change his views.

Mr. Bhutto : How many chief officers of Municipalities in Sind are Moslems ?—Has a better qualified Moslem been rejected ?

Sir J. Simon : Is it your point Mr. Bhutto that notwithstanding Moslem preponderance, Hindu Chief Executive Officers of Municipalities were selected ?

Witness : Hindus preponderate in Municipal areas.

Mr. Bhutto : I want to point out that in the District Boards where Moslems predominate, they appointed five Hindus in the seven districts as Chief Officers.

Witness : My complaint is that Hindus in the various services are being unjustly superseded.

Replying to Sardar Mazumdar, witness stated that Local Boards dominated by Moslems taxed the non-agricultural population which was mainly Hindu far more than the agricultural.

Mr. Patil : You think that there would be sufficient work for the Legislative Council in Sind ?—It will depend on the men who will do the work, but the Sind voter is likely to return men who know nothing of how to run the administration. The Moslems, who are backward, would be returned and the advanced communities would fall into the hands of the backward people.

Raja Nawabali : You say that separation is not for the welfare of the people. Who is to determine it if the majority of the people want it ?—The people should first be in a position to know their own interests. They don't understand them. I am sure if there were a referendum and the sentimental appeal of Moslem Raj were not to overshadow the real economic point of view and the people knew that they would be taxed, they would all oppose it.

Question : For the sake of the 26 per cent, you want to hold up the 74 per cent ?—You might as well say that the Moslems are holding up the whole of the Bombay Presidency.

Dr. Suhrawardy : What's your objection to the separation of Sind when you have Delhi, a smaller province ?—It is a province only in name. I told the Hartog Committee that its progress was suffering because of the smallness of the province.

Dr. Suhrawardy : Supposing the Central Government provided the finances to meet the financial difficulties ?—I consider it fantastic for the Government to do so and, as a taxpayer of the Government of India, I would object to it.

Sir John Simon taking advantage of the fact that the witness was a Professor of Economics discussed partly the technical side of the case. He said that in dealing with the subject of public debt, a distinction must be drawn between debt incurred without assets and that with assets. Any new Government that took over the latter took over the entire obligation. The Sukkur Barrage fell into the category of debt having a great asset.

Sir John Simon asked whether there were irrigation works in the various parts of the world which did not yield the expected return and were a loss.

Mr. Chablani : But the Sukkur Barrage is the biggest work.

Sir John Simon : If the Sukkur Barrage is going to be a great source of revenue, it would be necessary not only for the engineers to construct it but for an adminis-

tration to administer water and sell land at the proper value and that administration is very important.—That's so.

Sir John Simon: After all, the Government of India is answerable for the debt. It is a serious matter for the people in Sind to consider whether the Government of India would be willing to hand over this work without retaining control over the revenue from irrigation.—That is so.

Sir John Simon: I am expressing no opinion. You agree with that from the point of view of the economist?—Yes.

Raja Nawabali: You say, in reply to the financial objection to separation, that a majority of the population would be prepared to stand the extra cost of separating the province?—Yes.

Sir H. Gour: You quote the Nehru Report in support. Are you in its favour as a whole?—We never based our claim on the Nehru Report.

Sir H. Gour: You then base it on the existence of backwardness and the need for development. Have you considered any other alternative to achieve the same object?—No, we have not.

Mr. Uberoi: Will certain communities be taxed more while others will not be taxed?—That's a matter of detail.

One member of the deputation informed Mr. Uberoi that within the last ten years considerable political and educational progress had been made in Sind and the people now wanted separation.

Sir John Simon, thanking the deputation, asked them to submit a supplementary memorandum and assured them that the Conference would consider the matter from the point of view of practical politics and give very careful consideration to it. This finished the Karachi evidence and the Commission left for Quetta the same evening. They spent three days in Quetta without taking any evidence. They left Quetta on the 16th November and arrived at Peshawar on the 17th noon. They were received at the station by officials headed by Sir Norman Bolton, Chief Commissioner and by the Frontier members invited to sit with the Conference.

### The Commission at Peshawar.

As the special train left Peshawar City Station, and was proceeding slowly towards the Cantonment Station, a large crowd of boycotters in charge of the Khilafat and other Congress leaders and volunteers who had assembled near the fort shouted "Simon go back" and waved black flags. Two big flags, prominently placed, contained the words "Simon go back." The route was well-guarded by bayoneted police. Placards were posted all over the City exhorting the people to join the crowd at the station. One placard signed by Mr. Amirchand Bhusaval on behalf of the Congress stated that the Parliamentary Commission was against the principle of self-determination and that the Nehru Report had given the constitution that the country wanted and that they should boycott the Commission. The Secretary, Khilafat Committee, in a different poster, declared that the Frontier was not even given Reforms, and that the Khilafat Committee, the Muslim League and the Congress having boycotted the Commission, they must all join the boycott demonstration. A third placard contained the signatures of 50 boycott leaders of the districts. It declared that as the Bray Report had been thrown into the waste-paper basket, no better results could be had from the present enquiry.

The demonstrators came out at eight in the morning and paraded through the streets. They had intended to hold demonstration at Peshawar city station, but the authorities informed them that the roads had been closed, but that they could stand near the fort and demonstrate as the train passed along.

Mr. Amirchand Bhusaval paid a tribute to the courtesy shown by the police and the Magistrate and also mentioned the fact that as the train passed and they shouted "Simon go back" the British Commissioners good-humouredly took their hats off and waved them. When the train passed, the crowd held a meeting presided over by Sardar Ram Singh, and addressed by Messrs Amirchand and Paira Khan, when a resolution was passed affirming boycott, and declaring that the Frontier co-opted members of the Simon Conference were not their representatives. The demonstrators then returned to the city and paraded the streets in procession.

PESHAWAR—19th NOVEMBER 1928

## The Khans' Deputation

The Simon Conference heard the entire non-official evidence to-day. They first received a deputation of the Khans (Frontier aristocrats). This was followed by a Hindu deputation and a Sikh deputation. Finally two deputations, calling themselves the Advanced Hindu Party and the Advanced Moslem Party presented their case.

Khan Bahadur Abdul Ghafoor Khan led a deputation of about twenty-five Khans, who claim hereditary rights of leadership and are chiefs of the various tribes.

The leader of the deputation read out a statement saying that they wanted a scheme of reforms for the Frontier Province with a Council with the same powers as were enjoyed by other provinces. The people of the Province, he said, had a common stock and differed from other races of India. They had their own customs and did not want violent changes in the administrative machinery. The Legislative Council, they advocated, should consist of two-third nominated and one-third elected members. The Khans had been associated with Government officers in the work of administration as natural leader of the people and feared that the introduction of the elective system on a wide scale would disorganise the present state of society and remove that trust and confidence which the people placed in the Khans. They wanted four seats in the Assembly, three in the Council of State and narrated the military services rendered by the Khans as an additional argument for a special consideration of their claims.

Sir John Simon asked whether the deputation had considered the question of the franchise.—The witness replied that they had not as they thought some special committee would go into that question.

The witness further told Sir John Simon that two-thirds of the members of the Local Council should be nominated by the Chief Commissioner. As regards the electorates, the Hindus being so small, the Moslems would not object to joint electorate ; but, if the Hindus so wanted they would have separate electorates. The majority of Hindus lived in the towns.

Raja Nawabali: If the Hindus have no objection to joint electorate ?—We won't object either.

Question: Why do you want nomination of two-thirds of the members to the Council ?—A : These need not be all Khans. What we want is that a majority in the Council be of Khans, so that our problems may not suffer from a sudden introduction of changes that are bound to create discord.

Sir H. Gour: Don't the Hindus pay 80 per cent. of the income-tax here ?—I have no knowledge.

Question: Are not the Hindus educationally far in advance of other communities ?—They have larger facilities in the towns. I must add that the Moslems pay nearly a fourth of the land revenue.

Sir Abdul Qayum: And the income-tax which the Hindus pay really falls on the consumer ? (Laughter).

Sir H. Gour: You say that the people are like your children. How would you educate them in administration and what share would you give them ?—They will be associated with us in the Council and by degrees, when their knowledge, patriotism and friendly spirit of co-operation develop, the backward classes will be fit for being included in larger numbers.

Question: In the election you will allow the tenants to have the vote ?—Yes, those who fulfil the qualification to be laid down.

Question: You are definite that the Khans would be prepared to bear additional taxation to balance the budget ?—We have had suggestions.

Sir J. Simon: Of course, the matter introduces complications, but you think that the difficulties on the whole ought to be got over ?—We naturally expect that assistance would be given to us to develop ourself by the Government of India.

Question: Supposing you are formed into a constituency to elect Khans ? We want nomination.

Mr. Ubero: Would you not experiment in reforms by introducing the system of election in the local bodies ?—No. We must preserve our nominated seats in the local bodies.

Question : You are prepared to extend separate electorates to the Hindus. Won't you extend the same to the Sikhs who are a distinct community?—We include the Sikhs among the Hindus and, at any rate, their number here is so small that it disqualifies them for separate treatment.

Question : You represent the conservative element in your province ? We are not divided politically on that basis.

Question : Some of the Khans, not long ago, whose imagination was fired by the recent reforms in Afghanistan, wanted full-fledged reforms?—I do not know. The present scheme is the result of a compromise. We presented no memorial to the Chief Commissioner asking for full-fledged reforms.

Dr. Suhrawardy : Have you considered the question of a second chamber?—No. This province is so small.

Mr. Nawaz Khan of Dera (co-opted member) : You wish the reforms to be in such a modified form as may suit politically and financially, and suit the Khans as well as the Local Government?—Yes. And may also satisfy the people.

Major Akbar Khan suggested that the sons of aristocrats in the Frontier had proved capable officers.—The witness agreed and added that people having a hereditary claim to position were, in spite of the democratic spirit, regarded with greater respect and advocated that half the posts in the superior services, open to Indians, should be reserved for the aristocracy.

### **The Frontier Hindus' Deputation**

The Khans were followed before the Simon Commission by an equally large deputation of Hindus led by Rai Bahadur Thakur Datta.

The deputation read a summary of its main case, which opposed the extension of reforms and of the elective system to this Province. They urged that strategic and political reasons are against the change, and so also were financial difficulties. Moreover, any constitutional changes which weakened the executive authority would be dangerous to the peace of the Empire, as the people of the Province were only geographically separated from Afghanistan. Further, any reform would undermine the influence of the Khans, who had been a bulwark and important safeguard against the unruly elements in the Province.

They felt that as long as the dominant community had not reached the stage of political advancement where politics is dissociated from religion and religion from affairs of public life, provincial autonomy on communal lines would not be acceptable to the Hindus. But while they oppose reforms, they would not oppose the setting up of an Advisory Council, leaving further advance to the Central Government through periodical inquiries. They claim in the Assembly two seats for Hindus and two for Mahomedans, urge the industrial development of the Province, judicial amalgamation with the Punjab, repeal of the Land Alienation Act and opening the public services to free open competition.

While this summary was being read Sir John Simon asked how much land revenue Mahomedans paid?—They pay it by borrowing from the Hindus. (Laughter).

Rai Bahadur Thakurdatta further explained that Hindus though formerly in favour of amalgamation with the Punjab, now oppose it because as a result of the forward policy their life and property were safe, but their commercial stake and their educational advancement entitled them to the same privileged position as was held by Europeans in various parts of India where they had large stakes.

Major Attlee : How would the Advisory Council be formed?—It could be by indirect election, the local bodies electing members as under the Minto-Morley Reforms.

The Hon. Mr. E. Cadogan pointed out that there was criticism of the suggestion that the judiciary of this Province be amalgamated with the Punjab.

The witness explained that in a small province they could not get a proper personnel and the Judicial Commissioners here had not the same respect, nor their decisions, as High Court judges had. He suggested two High Court judges should sit here so that in case of disagreement between them a third High Court judge could decide this issue.

Examined by Lord Strathcona the witness stated that he did not wish any franchise



for the Local Boards, and that for the Advisory Council the Local Boards would be electors.

Lord Strathcona.—You want the number of civilians to be increased?—The communal question here is so acute that the Deputy Commissioner, City Magistrate and Sub-Divisional Officer must be civilians.

Lord Strathcona.—In your opinion you have not enough British official?—There ought to be more.

Dr. Suhrawardy.—You want adequate representation for Hindus? What would satisfy you?—We have asked for representatives for each community in the Assembly.

Sir John Simon.—During the Bray inquiry the Hindus were disposed to urge re-amalgamation with the Punjab, but now I gather you oppose it?—The Pathan mentality being what it is, we felt afraid of the kidnapping and murders that were going on. But since the forward policy has been adopted riots and kidnapping have ceased and the ground for amalgamation has disappeared. That is my personal opinion.

Dr. Suhrawardy.—Will you withdraw opposition to the reforms if there is a general electorate and your position is made strong?—It may be, if the whole of India gets it and the Hindu position in the Legislative Assembly is strong and we are able to get protection from the Assembly and the Moslems will not be able to persecute us.

Dr. Suhrawardy :—You object to reform because you fear dominance upon one race. The Madras Moslem may have the same objection.

Sir John Simon.—The witness has pointed out that the Pathan mentality is peculiar and there is nothing corresponding to that in Madras ; and secondly, commercially and educationally they are very important.

Nawab of Hoti.—Supposing a Council is created with a two-third nominated and one-third elected element would you object?—Any Legislative Council would be a great disaster, but we will have the lesser evil.

Do you think even one-third elective seats will diminish the influence of the Khans?—It would, because some Khans are not so intellectual, and when representatives of the middle classes come the Khans' influence will be lessened.

Do you think officers recruited from the aristocracy have proved better than those from the middle classes?—I would rather not give an answer to the question.

You think a decrease in the number of British officers will affect the administration?—Most injuriously.

Sir H. S. Gour.—It does not matter whether you are a majority or minority, but you base your claim on the fact that you are an advancing community?—Yes, we have a large commercial stake.

Sir H. S. Gour made a suggestion that the difficulty could be got over by this Province electing five or seven members to the Assembly who should constitute an Advisory Council to represent their point of view to the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India.

The witness said that the idea appealed to them, but the details would be important. They would like the authorities to have their views fully before them.

Sir H. S. Gour.—What you really want in the services are unbiassed men, and if such Indian officers are available you would be satisfied?—Yes.

What representation would you insist on, supposing there were a Council for the Frontier?—40 per cent.

Raja Nawabali :—You advocated an increase in British officers. What is good for the Frontier, would not that hold good for other parts of India?—No, because in other parts you don't have to deal with the Pathan mentality.

Sir Abdul Qayum.—Do you oppose reforms because of the incapacity of the Moslem population or because you fear that your interests and rights will not be safe if these are introduced?—On both grounds.

How will the Pathan mentality affect you more than it does at present?—Because they will get more powers. The Legislative Council will have power to pass laws and the Ministers will have a voice in the general administration.

But there will be a right of veto.—It will be exercised in emergent cases only.

Sir Abdul Qayum.—I can hardly control my feelings. Whatever has been the

experience in other parts of India, you think that the Pathan mentality is worse than that?—You are excitable and easily go into factions.

How do the Hindus find the tribal attitude in tribal areas, Is it not friendly?—Hindus live there as dependents. We would rather leave the Province than live under the conditions under which Hindus live there.

Will you agree that whatever our mentality and factions we have not in the last thirty years gone in for any fanatical or political crime like the murder of Mr Day?—What about the Kohat tragedy?

The mentality is different from the Katarpur mentality.—That was sporadic while with you it is a permanent feature.

Do you know that a compromise was reached at Kohat while the Nagpur Moslems have not been reconciled by a large majority of Hindus?

Sir John Simon.—I think you have indicated clearly your criticism and the witness is not going to be covered.

Finally Sir Abdul Qayum asked whether this deputation was aware of the fact that there was an advanced section of Hindu opinion?—They have no following and are serving as gramophones of certain interests.

### Frontier Sikhs' Deputation

Sardar Raja Singh led the deputation of five Sikhs, who claimed that Sikhs were the most important minority. They paid a large amount of income-tax and were educationally more advanced than the other communities. They were the last rulers of the Punjab, from which the Frontier had been carved out. They recognised the Indian desire for a larger share in the administration and would fall in with the general view regarding the electorate all over India. They favoured a joint electorate with reservation of seats, and wanted for Sikhs, who though numerically were 1 per cent., 25 per cent. seats in the Council.

Sir John Simon.—What seats would you give the Hindus then?—We consider the Hindus and Moslems both distinct from us.

Sir John Simon.—If you have 25 per cent. you will give the Hindus at least the same?—Yes.

Sir John Simon.—Then Moslems, who are 93 per cent, do not get a majority?—We are used to it. There are 16 seats in the Municipality of which eight are held by Hindus and Sikhs and eight by Moslems.

Sir Abdul Qayum.—Is there no cry for elections in Municipalities as the people think elected members would be better than nominated?—Naturally they would think so.

Do you know in places like Bannu, where Moslems are larger in number, non-Moslem members form a majority?—That may be due to the taxation proportion.

Mr. Beliram Malhotra and Mr. Kapoor gave evidence representing advanced Hindu opinion. They said that they wanted reforms for the Province and one-third of the total seats in the Council to be given to non-Moslems.

### Deputation Of Advanced Moslems

The Conference then heard the deputation of advanced Moslem opinion, consisting of about 25. During the course of the day the advanced party of Khans' and agricultural representatives had also sent in a representation and they too were called in as the views of the two deputations were mostly similar, and in all they formed 50.

Khan Bahadur Sadduddin, Additional Judicial Commissioner, Frontier Province led the deputation and told Sir John Simon that he was speaking in a personal capacity and not as a Government servant. Explaining their object, he said they were for full fledged reform and accepted in its entirety the report of the Bray Committee majority.

Sir John Simon.—Do you ask, without an intermediary stage, to get the same reform that the other provinces get. Suppose full Ministerial responsibility were given to the other provinces, including the transfer of law and order, is it your recommendation that the Frontier Province should also have it?—I don't see any objection.

You accept the Bray report, but one of its main conclusions was that the administration of the tribal area will have to be separated from that of the administered area?—I don't think it is necessary. The Chief Commissioner can be the head of both areas and the administration even at present is different for the two.

Colonel Lane Fox : Do you suggest the administration of the tribal area would be carried on by a Minister responsible to the Legislature?—No, the Chief Commissioner would be directly in charge of that area.

Are you prepared to face a deficit?—I have never been able to understand this question. This Province was created for Imperial purposes, and even under the Swaraj constitution in the Nehru report this Province is kept as a separate entity. They would not grudge us money, and increased expenditure must be met by the Government of India.

Then the Government of India would expect to have control?—They are already controlling us.

You are taking away their control and expect them to pay your expenditure?—We serve as door-keepers ; they give us as wages. I have never heard of a master controlling how wages are spent.

Lord Burnham : Is not the Army the door-keeper?—The Army alone cannot keep the door. Whenever anything happens the brunt falls on us.

Colonel Lane Fox : Do you think all India will agree to pay a large share?—India has already agreed in the Nehru report, and the Assembly too has passed unanimously a resolution, but if you find it is impossible to finance us send us back to the Punjab. We will favour amalgamation.

Mr. Hartshorn : The Swarajists in the Assembly walked out, so the resolution could not be called unanimous.

Lord Strathcona : If you have Legislative Council how many members would you suggest?—The Bray Committee has already put it at 30 member. These would be enough, as we are for franchise on a liberal basis.

Dr. Suhrawardy : You know Lala Lajpat Rai as a leader of the Nationalist Party strongly supported the Frontier reforms last March?—Yes, and though the Swaraj Party walked out the Swaraj leader, Pandit Motilal Nehru, is responsible for the report which favours full autonomy.

Sir John Simon : You cannot tell me what the arrangements in that report are about financing this Province?—You might have read Pandit Motilal's reply that he wanted them to start with a clean slate and then there would be time to consider about the finances.

Sir John Simon.—A clean slate without any finances.

Dr. Suhrawardy.—You have had no experience of the elective system, even in local bodies. Would you not as a practical statesman begin with an instalment of the Montford Reforms?—Most decidedly not. We, educationally, socially and in other respects, are just as good as the rest of India.

The witness told Mr. Uberoi that their literacy was about 5 per cent, compared with the Punjab's 9 per cent. The Western Punjab districts were less literate than the Frontier districts. In dealing with minorities they would treat the Sikhs as a distinct community and give the minorities reciprocal treatment.

Sir Zulfikarali Khan.—There is a fear that if you have the administration in your hands you may run the country into internecine war—I am surprised to find such an idea. We want to sink or swim with the rest of India. Conditions here are in no way worse than those in the rest of India.

Sir Zulfikar.—Do you think the interests of the Khans will be safe in the hands of a popular party? It will not be fair to ignore the interests of others?—Their interests are not separate. They want the same education and the same codes of law.

Sir H. S. Gour.—You want reforms. Every Government must develop on the nation-building side. That means progressively growing expenditure.—So will also be progressive the contribution from the Central Government according to the fixed percentage of their expenditure.

Sir H. S. Gour.—And so far as finances are concerned you won't tax the people? You expect the Central Government to pay for it?—The Central Government must co-operate in the matter.

The witness, further examined by Sir Abdul Qayum, explained his position that

they wanted by act of Parliament, one pie or two pies in the rupee for instance to be allotted for the Frontier Province. Of this sum they could have one portion set apart for the settled districts and the other for the unadministered tracts. Expenditure would be classified Provincial and Imperial. "So long as we serve an Imperial purpose we are entitled to be maintained at Central expense. Several districts in the Punjab are not self-supporting."

Sir Abdul Qayum.—You mean that it is the duty of India to educate the door-keeper so that he may not open the door to some undesirable person, and that higher education would make him alive to his duties to India? Everything done in this Province is part of the defence of India.

Nawab of Hoti : The Army is defending this part with you?—In that way the British Navy is defending Madras.

Sir Abdul Qayum : The report says that peace and tranquillity of India depend to a large extent on the Frontier Province.

Sirdar Gulkhan appealed to the Conference to think Imperially and not parochially.

Sir John Simon.—The best think to do is to think practically.

Sirdar Gulkhan.—We want to go back to the Punjab if we don't get reform, or you can combine us with a portion of Multan and Rawalpindi.

This closed the proceedings for the day. Sir John Simon said that there were practical difficulties which must be solved from the point of view of practical statesmanship, but he had sympathy with them and promised full consideration of their case.

#### PESHAWAR—20th NOVEMBER 1928

Mr. F. C. Isemonger, Inspector-General of Police, N.-W. F., since 1925, and Mr. A. A. F. Metcalfe, Deputy Commissioner, Peshawar, who had experience of political Agency work were examined by the Simon Conference to-day.

Mr. Isemonger, answering a series of questions by Sir John Simon said that the police force worked only in five settled districts and that of the five Superintendents one, till recently, was an Indian promoted from the Provincial Service. The Police force was 5,000, all armed, for two-and-a-quarter million population which meant one policeman for every 375 inhabitants and to every two-and-a-quarter miles. The police force was recruited in the province and partly from the Punjab. About 28 per cent of them were literate but on entering service all were taught elementary reading to enable them, for instance, to take the number of a motor car or a tonga.

Giving statistics about crime, Mr. Isemonger said that there were, last year, 514 true cases of murder, 56 dacoities, 101 robberies, and 1,052 true cases of burglaries.

Sir John Simon : In England burglaries mean only night house-breaking—Here they include daylight house-breaking, though the latter are very small.

Sir John Simon : What is meant by true cases?—Cases which, on police investigation, were found actually to have occurred and not those reported by the people falsely or maliciously.

Sir John Simon : What percentage of true cases can be brought to trial?—Of murder cases last year 99 were convicted by judicial courts. 75 cases were acquitted by judicial courts, 170 were convicted by "Jirgah." Fifty five cases sent up to "Jirgah" were acquitted and the balance of the cases were not apprehended.

Sir John Simon : What is the practice by which some charges are sent up to "Jirgahs"? It happens in some cases that, before the report of a murder is made by the relative he prepares the case and involves people who are his enemies, and if such a case is sent up for judicial trial it will lead to an acquittal. It is better to get such a case tried by "Jirgahs" who sift evidence and submit their conclusions to the district magistrate for final orders.

Sir John Simon : Who decides the reference of a case "to Jirgah"?—The district magistrate.

Sir John Simon : You know the difference between this trial and a judicial in courts. Are you satisfied at the way "Jirgahs" work?—On the whole, yes. The extreme penalty of death is never imposed by "Jirgah."

Further questions were being put about the "Jirgah" system but as the next witness was more experienced on the subject it was decided to postpone them.

Sir John Simon : What is the Constabulary Force?—It consists approximately

of 5,000 men and is a sort of ally service to ours. But its main duty lies in the border. It keeps watch on raiders, collects political information, and communicates it to Chief Commissioner. Khassadars work in independent tribal areas.

Sir John Simon : What is the percentage for Indianization here ? Of course it varies, everywhere ?—Twentyfive per cent.

Sir John Simon : Tell us frankly what is your view about the prevalence of corruption in the police force ?—Corruption exists in every department throughout the country. It does not exist more in the police. On the other hand the supervisory agency and the punishment accorded in the police are better than any other service.

Examined by Lord Strathcona about the Frontier Crimes Regulation, witness declared it was used where the ordinary law could not work, both for sending up people for trial to "Jirgah" and placing them on security. "In my opinion the Frontier Crimes Regulation is absolutely necessary up here."

Lord Strathcona : But the Bray report wanted it not to be applied to towns ?—I would agree to that.

Viscount Burnham wanted to put on record the remarks of the Bray report on the subject which he quoted stating *inter alia* that the repeal of the criminal section of the Regulation would mean not only removing tribal custom but undermining the forces of law and order and depriving Hindus in particular of one of the greatest safeguards in a land where passions are so great and local evidence so difficult to obtain.

Viscount Burnham : You consider necessary the present proportion of European recruitment for the good conduct and efficiency of the police force ?—yes.

Viscount Burnham : You deprecate any chance ?—Yes.

Viscount Burnham was informed that police duties were increased by the duty of patrolling cantonments and keeping watch by day and by night.

Viscount Burnham : It follows, therefore, that a large part of the cost of maintenance of the police here is connected directly with the military interests of these provinces ?—The fact that we have large cantonments undoubtedly imposes extra duty and the maintenance of a large force in our cantonments for their protection.

Sir John Simon intervening, stated that the cost of the Frontier Police was Rs. 28 lakhs and of the Frontier Constabulary Rs. 22 lakhs.

Col. Lane-Fox : Do you recruit any policemen from the tribal area ?—Yes.

Mr. Hartshorn : Do I understand that for purposes of the Frontier Constabulary, you recruit them ?—Their service is entirely on the border and they want men for getting useful political information.

Major Attlee : Has there been much crime during your services in the Frontier ?—There is considerable improvement up here. Kidnapping has largely disappeared. We get more convictions and there is greater peace. People can travel at night where they were unable to travel without any escort.

Major Attlee : Is it due to a change in the methods of the police or the habits of the population ?—It is due largely to changed conditions on the Frontier. The police might take a certain amount of credit for the improved methods, but the first factor is the changed conditions by the extension of roads and more peaceful conditions among tribes.

Major Attlee : Is much of the crime due to feuds or economic conditions ?—If economic conditions are good, naturally, there is less crime. The number of murders is equal to the number of thefts. Life is very cheap out here. A man may be shot or knifed in a quarrel or a trivial dispute. In fact there are far more cases of the latter kind than murders on account of high way robbery.

Sir Hari Singh Gour : How far do the public co-operate with the police ?—Not to a very great extent.

Is there any marked hostility ?—Lack of sympathy.

Is the percentage of those who escape into the Trans-Frontier area large ?—Fairly large, but Political Agents are able to bring pressure either for their being passed on to other areas or handed to the Political Agency or, if the police get information, they capture them.

Is it done by an executive act or the Extradition Act ?

Sir John Simon : The Extradition Act surely does not apply to the tribal area.  
 Sir Hari Singh Gour : Are "jirgahs" who try them bound by the rules of evidence ?—There are certain rules though the Criminal Procedure Code is not followed. On the whole the system works fairly.

There is no judicial check ?—The Chief Commissioner can revise in certain cases and the "jirgah's" order is only a recommendation to the Deputy Commissioner.

Sir Abdal Qayum : The Chief Commissioner can interfere only if the sentence is excessive or illegal ?

Sir Hari Singh Gour : What is the percentage of those punished for corruption ?—Very low. There were 137 punishments last year, including 38 dismissals and one officer was dismissed for dishonesty.

Sir Arthur Froom : Are policemen murdered in the execution of their duty ?—On November 7, a constable was shot and a sub-Inspector wounded. They constantly run the risk of life.

Do tribesmen regard it fair game to shoot policemen ?—No. I think they only shoot to have themselves being shot in case the policeman has the opportunity to down him first.

Sir Zulfiqar Ali : Have you come across any cases of anarchical crime such as occurred in Bengal ?—No case in my experience.

Is there any nervousness among the Hindu population as to police administration ?—Yes. We have for some years been endeavouring to give a definite percentage of appointments to Hindus to prevent the force being entirely Mohammedan. There is considerable difficulty in getting men up here from the Punjab.

Though there has been a diminution of crime, this has not given Hindus any peace of mind ?—Hindus are not nervous in regard to general statistics of crime but on occasions of communal troubles elsewhere which have a repercussion here, there is a feeling of insecurity. For that reason Hindus would like to have a percentage of the police of their own people.

What are the relations between Hindus and Mohammedans ?—No communal disturbance for three years ; which shows improved relations.

Your 11,000 policemen and the Constabulary Force cost Rs. 50 lakhs, but a similar force in the Punjab costs less ?—Our conditions of service are different. We have to keep constant watch and have a strong force to guard police stations.

Do policemen show any partiality towards the community ?—It is extraordinary that the police force is working unaffected by any communal trouble. They do their duty loyally.

Sir John Simon : I am glad we had a similar testimony in the Punjab.

Raja Nawabali : Why do you look to the Punjab for Hindu recruitment ?—There is very little offer from Hindus up here and they are not generally suitable material. I want the best material for the conditions that prevail in the Frontier. I want the element recruited for Indian regiments.

Mr. M. C. Rajah : Do you recruit depressed classes ?—No. The candidates are not suitable.

If suitable candidates are available ?—I am prepared to take them.

Sir Abdul Qayum examined the witness at length on the composition of the force and its cantonment and city duties and those in rural areas.

Sir John Simon asked what he was driving at.

Sir Abdul Qayum stated that he wanted to show that much of the police force was not occupied in rural areas which, therefore, were not truculent.

Witness replied that about 3,000 men that is 50 per cent of the force was used for rural areas.

Sir Abdul Qayum : Do you think violent crime is to some extent due to the existence of this "jirgah" system which makes the police slack ?—I cannot admit slackness on the part of the police. We are confronted with a large number of difficulties. There is the custom of the people and those concerned do not report the matter till they prepare their own case involving their enemies.

Sir John Simon to Sir Abdul Qayum : Are you seeking to support the view that there ought to be no Frontier Crime Regulation ?

Sir Abdul : The Frontier Crimes Regulation is a very useful measure. I wanted to know when the differentiation is made between a strong case and a weak case.

Do you find policemen reliable ?—Very reliable.

Are you afraid of using the present police force in riots ?—I have had no serious riot and am not aware that the police has failed.

Sir Abdul Qayum : Is the police force part of the Punjab ?—All-India officials are on the same cadre, but the provincial service is separate.

Who selects the Inspector-General ?—It is a selected appointment. I expect the various Governments concerned have a say in the matter.

Is preference given to local experience ?

Sir John Simon, intervening, said that these were hardly questions which the Inspector-General could be expected to answer and they had no bearing on the constitutional inquiry.

The Nawab of Hoti suggested that the army be asked to patrol cantonments thereby reducing police expenses.

Witness said that it would not materially affect the police force and the Army Commander would probably ask for an increase in his regimental strength.

### Mr. Metcalfe's Evidence

Mr. A. A. F. Metcalfe, Deputy Commissioner, Peshawar, was examined. He informed the Conference that the Frontier Crime Regulation was applied to the settled districts and also, in some cases, extensively to the Agency area.

Sir John Simon : So far as the civil disputes are concerned the provision is that the Deputy Commissioner, if satisfied that a dispute exists which is likely to cause trouble, may refer it to the Jirgah. Do this Council of Elders make an elaborate finding in writing ?—It is fairly elaborate, but, of course, in a majority of cases some prominent local gentleman is asked to arrange a compromise without reference to the Jirgah and the disputes are thus settled.

Question : You do that and so will any sensible administration to my mind, but, where people do not agree, they refer the case to the Jirgah who report their finding to the Deputy Commissioner. Does he accept their finding ?—Yes, as a general rule.

Question : They may affect matrimonial relations or land ?—Yes, generally questions relating to differences of view. Almost invariably the finding in both civil and criminal cases is unanimous.

Sir John Simon : We saw something of this in Baluchistan and in the Punjab where we saw a panchayat. It seems that the system has this advantage, not only does it get rid of a good deal of the technical load but, since the inquiry is made more or less on the spot, false or ridiculous evidence is largely excluded, because people know the right offenders.

A member : It avoids payment of the heavy court fees.

Sir John Simon : And there is no wasting of money on lawyers. (Laughter.)

Regarding the criminal side the witness said that the Deputy Commissioner, in forwarding the case, formulates questions which form the terms of reference to the Jirgah and the Jirgah sends a report giving both the facts of the case and the reasons for punishment, and frequently it includes a recommendation for mercy based on the circumstances of the case. When the report reaches the Deputy Commissioner, he discusses the matter with the Jirgah to make sure that the finding is based on evidence and conviction of the Jirgah. The Jirgah has no power to recommend a death sentence, only a maximum penalty up to 14 years, while all punishment over seven years is subject to the Chief Commissioner's sanction.

Sir John Simon : Do you consider that on the whole the system works satisfactorily ?—Yes, it does. It would be very difficult to do away with it. Its disadvantages are outweighed by its advantages, but it required to be administered by experienced officials, who scrutinise with great jealousy the list of Jirgah members and take good care to see that it is not used by these members for purposes of corruption. The list is very small and is purposely kept low. Any one found inefficient or corrupt is promptly removed. That is the most essential safeguard in the working of the system.

Sir John Simon : Then is this system one which, you think, should be preserved ?—Certainly.

The witness told Sir John Simon that the work of the Deputy Commissioner differed from that in other parts of India, as he had to do political work as well.

Question : Would you like to say anything about the work in connection with

law and order, considering the difficulties involved in that part of the world?—Yes, It is difficult owing to three causes. Firstly, the light manner in which the Pathan regards human life. There is little value attached to it in Peshawar district.

Sir John Simon : I suppose there are a certain number which are unlicensed?—I have no doubt (laughter).

Continuing, the witness said that the proximity of the tribal area encouraged the accused to seek refuge there. Out of 505 murders, 222 were committed in the Peshawar district alone. This finished the Peshawar evidence and both the Simon Commission and the Central Committee left the same night for Delhi.

#### DELHI—21st NOVEMBER 1929

The Commissioners arrived at Delhi on the 21st November and were welcomed on alighting by Sir Mahomed Habibullah, Sir B. N. Mittra, Mr. J. Crerar, Sir George Rainy, Sir George Schuster, Sir John Thompson, Mr. Haig and Mr. G. S. Bajpai. Besides these there were other officials and nonofficials including members of the District Board, Honorary Magistrates, representatives of the Jamiat-ul-Quraish, about 150 all-told, to welcome the Commissioners. Admission to the platform was regulated by tickets. Some fifty men of the depressed classes with flags of welcome were stationed further up the route near Barakhambha. With the drawing up of the special train into the siding the demonstrators outside began shouting at the top of their voices "Simon go back," and "Shame."

Anti-Simon demonstrators' procession started from Queen's Gardens and paraded through the principal streets of the city carrying placards bearing "Down with Imperialism," "Simon, go back." By the time they reached New Delhi railway station the number of processionists was estimated at between 10 to 15 thousand. Here they lined up along Qutab Road behind the wire barrier on the other side of which was a police cordon under the personal supervision of Mr. Jeffreys, Senior Superintendent of Police and Mr. S. Pratap, Deputy Commissioner.

The Simon Joint Free Conference commenced their work on the 22nd NOVEMBER in the afternoon for the first time without a provincial wing, as the inquiry here relates to the operation of the constitution in the Central Government. The conference took place in one of the Committee rooms of the Council House and, as usual, admission for public purposes was confined to the Press. Sir John Simon took his seat in the centre and the Commissioners sat to his right and members of the Indian Central Committee to his left. Mr. Vernon Hartshorn was not present.

The evidence of Mr. Haig, Home Secretary, and Mr. Dunnott, Special Officer (Reforms) were examined on the material submitted to the Conference by the department on the operation of the constitution.

Sir John Simon, summing up the present constitutional position in a series of questions, said there were besides the Commander-in-Chief six members of the Government but the Statute did not fix any limit. It was provided that three at least of the members of the Executive Council be persons who had been at least ten years in the service of the Crown in India and that one must be a lawyer of standing. He asked how this provision came into the constitution.

As witnesses were trying to look into their books Sir John Simon remarked that the Montford report had laid down certain principles on the subject and that the appointment of more Indians merely followed the principle laid down when Lord Sinha was first appointed to the Viceroy's Council and it was the Joint Parliamentary Committee, which laid down that not less than three members of the Viceroy's Council be Indians. He further observed that while the provision regarding men having been previously ten years in the service of the Crown in India probably meant to apply to those in the services like the I. C. S., the practice showed that Sir B. N. Mittra, an Indian Service man, had been appointed an executive councillor and, similarly, Sir Basil Blackett was a European non-service man; so that they could not say that this provision in the Government of India Act was a sort of classification between European and Indian.

Sir John Simon : Since the coming into operation of the Montford Reforms in January 1921 there has not yet been a case in which an individual chosen to fill a post on the Governor-General's Executive Council is an individual who has been previously an elected member of the Central Legislature?—No. There has been



no case, though in the case of Sir T. B. Sapru and Sir B. N. Sarma they were members of the Imperial Council.

Sir John Simon : It is an interesting fact, because in the Provinces there have been a good many cases in which men have been appointed Executive Councillors who had past experience as elected members of the Provincial Legislature, but this has not been the case in the Central Legislature.

After explaining the appointments of Secretaries to various departments Mr. Haig said that the general arrangement was that the Member sat in one House and the Secretary of the Department sat in the other.

Sir John Simon : There was one view that if the member of the Government was a member of the Chamber, say of the Council of State, it tended to enhance the authority and importance of the Chamber if on interesting and important occasions the Government Members came to address the Chamber.—Mr. Haig replied that Members of the Council of State felt satisfied when the Member in charge of the Department came up to address them on important occasions.

Sir John Simon said that what contributed to the importance of the House of Lords was the fact that some important Members of the Government were members of that House only. He added : "I gather that the present arrangement of interchange of visits is an arrangement which, on the whole works well. But the result is obviously that the occasions when the Secretary has a leading part to play in the debate are affected by the fact that it is on these occasions that his chief may visit the House." Mr. Haig said that that was so.

Sir John Simon : I think when the new Government is formed in England an ambitious young man wanting to be Under-Secretary would prefer to be in one House when his chief was in the other House ( Laughter. )

Mr. Haig : I think the system works well. Secretaries have an important part to play. It is only on occasions when the Member can spare the time that he comes to the other House.

Turning to the grouping in the Assembly, Sir John Simon said there were official members from provinces. Did they play an important part in the debate?—They are not frequently used but when they speak they play an important part.

Sir John Simon : It is material to ascertain how far the different elements in existing structure play a useful and effective part. It does not follow that because a number of officials are nominated to represent the provinces ( and I dare say they are very constant in attendance when their vote is needed ) that is all the part they ought to play.—Mr. Dunnett replied that they took part in the debates of a general character such as the amendment of the Civil Pr. Code.

Sir John Simon gave an illustration. Supposing, he said, the Burma Government was opposed to a measure of taxation, would its official member put forward that view?

Mr. Dunnett said that on matters of taxation, Provincial Governments were previously consulted, but on matters of provincial interest provincial members had, as in the case of the provincial contribution, spoken and voted against the Government.

Sir John Simon : It is a matter of great importance as to how a nominated official votes. Mr. Dunnett said that on matters of taxation there is a feeling that he does not agree with the Government. Mr. Haig said that nominated officials are always expected to support the Government.

Sir John Simon : Is that expectation in practice fulfilled?—I am not aware of instances in which it has not been fulfilled.

Sir John Simon next referred to the elected and nominated strength and asked :—"One wants to understand, when considering the constitutional problems of the Central Government, how things work with such a large elected majority in the Assembly and a small official element supporting the Government."

Mr. Dunnett : There are measures which are not controversial and which can be carried more or less by the general sense of the House. On other matters the Government manages to get through with a small majority. On occasions like that they have the support of the majority, at any rate of non-officials—not all. It is probably a measure that commends itself to the European group and it may be a measure that commends itself to the Mahomedan group, and with that support they can usually secure their majority ; not otherwise.

Sir John Simon : One of the contrasts between the Central Legislature and those in the provinces is that in the provinces, you have Government majority, that is, elected. The policy of the Government is framed in consultation with, and is supported by, Ministers who are elected and presumably, have a following among the elected members. And the official policy has general support. But in the Central Legislature you have no Ministers. You have got no element to support them and yet the history of the Central Legislature shows that, broadly speaking the policy that has been proposed has been carried out.

Mr. Haig : Yes, a considerable proportion of the policy has been followed. There is informal consultation between the Government leader and those of the opposition and sometimes legislation is the outcome of the report of the committee. We keep in close touch with opinion in the legislature. Viscount Burnham, intervening, read from the Government memorandum that the Assembly divided on the whole on 431 occasions and the results were favourable to the Government on 239 occasions and unfavourable on 192 occasions. There were 104 divisions on demands for grants of which the Government won 48 and lost 56, while on Bills the Government won 139 divisions and lost 91. On resolutions it won 52 divisions against 45.

Mr. Dunnett added that if fifteen elected members voted with the Government they generally won. Continuing Mr. Dunnett explained how Government generally managed to win divisions in the Assembly. He said : Firstly, there is no solid opposition. These parties do not always agree. Secondly their party organization is not completely efficient and therefore the Government has always to try either to detach one Party from the other Party or detach various members from individual Parties and in many cases, the Government has not much difficulty in getting fifteen elected members to make up 53 to win a division.

Sir John Simon : The figures might mean that you win on unimportant occasions.

Mr. Dunnett said that was not so and the fact that of the 190 Bills presented by the Government, only nine were lost and, up to this time, the Governor-General had to use certification only four times, including twice for the Finance Bill, showed that the Government got through its programme well on the whole.

Sir John Simon asked how the Council of State had acted as Second Chamber.

Witness said it had rejected on nine occasions Bills passed by the Assembly but there has been no occasion to have a joint sitting of both Houses.

Col. Lane-Fox pointed out that the Assembly constituencies were the largest of constituencies in the world. It was not impossible for members to be really representatives of such constituencies.

Mr. Haig : It is difficult to speak on the subject but it is obvious that the Assembly constituency being more scattered than the Provincial Council, its members are not closely in touch with their constituents. And there is not even the elementary machinery of a practical organization within the constituency.

Col. Lane-Fox : Does not that have the effect of making members irresponsible ?

Mr. Haig : It makes them more responsive to big all-India organizations like the Congress.

Col. Lane-Fox : Is a member sufficiently in touch with the constituents ?—I do not think that the country has really and politically developed to reach that state.

Col. Lane-Fox : If you substitute the system of indirect election for direct election you might get more responsible persons ?

Mr. Haig : You might certainly. They will be in closer touch with elections. They would be representing some other interest I take it. You may have local bodies to erect them to the Assembly or the Provincial Councils.

Col. Lane-Fox : His action can be questioned directly by somebody who put him there ?—Witness : I expect they would.

Col. Lane-Fox : One cause of the weakness of the Government in the Assembly is that there is an irresponsible element in it ?

Witness : Certainly. They are swayed by influences which are speaking specially of the Home Department, antagonistic to us.

Has the Assembly discussed the question whether its election be direct or indirect ?—There was no occasion to discuss it.

Major Attlee : Are there occasions when members, irrespective of Party organization, voted on matters of provincial interest ?

Mr. Haig :—One would expect them to vote provincially on important matters like remission of provincial contributions but my impression is that provincial members did not stike the line which might be considered favourable to their provincial interests but, rather struck to their Assembly grouping.

Major Attlee : You know Lancashire members have their own meeting. Do such meetings of provincial members take place ?—Not as far as I know.

Major Attlee : The minority Government in England could always be obstructed by the time being "talked-out." Do you have the same trouble here ?

Mr. Dunnett said : No such obstruction had occurred so far.

Mr. Haig : It occurs to me that one explanation is that members come from long distances and are anxious to get back home, while official members live on the spot. If the Government finds obstruction it can always wear them out.

### *DELHI—23rd NOVEMBER 1928*

The control of Law and Order was the principal subject discussed before the Simon Conference at Delhi on this day. There were two suggestions before the Conference : (1) That Law and Order should be transferred to Ministers answerable to the Provincial Legislatures, and (2) that it should be centralized with the Government of India. Mr. Haig, Home Secretary, stated that the existing control of the Government of India over Law and Order was very effective and there was no possibility of the Central Government actually taking over the direction and administration of police all over India, though it could lay down definite standards of pay and efficiency.

Even if Law and Order were transferred, he added, the Government of India being the ultimate authority responsible for the Intervention of the Army to restore order must have an effective voice in these matters.

### **Mr. Graham's Evidence**

Mr. L. Graham, Legislative Secretary, was next examined after lunch.

Asked to explain the functions of his department he said that they functioned as draftsmen and provided secretaries for select committees and also assisted unofficial members with drafting their bill.

Sir J. Simon : You function as parliamentary draftsmen and combine the functions of staff of the Speaker of the House ?

Mr. Graham : We have many other functions. All statutory rules and notifications are prepared by us on the basis of substance sent by other departments. We are largely occupied in advising Departments on the interpretation of statutes.

Sir J. Simon : That is done in England by Law Officers or legal advisers of the Departments.

Witness : Departments have no legal advisers here. We have also very heavy work in the examination of provincial bills requiring previous sanction of the Government of India. This is a very troublesome section to work, but we have come to pretty fair agreement as to the interpretation of sanction. We no longer have difference of opinion as to whether bills require sanction or not. We, after circulating the bill to the Departments concerned, take the orders of the Governor-General refusing or granting sanction.

Sir J. Simon : The point is of some constitutional importance. The Act provides that previous sanction be taken before the bill is considered.

Witness : In practice this is done before introduction. If the Provincial Government is satisfied, it may take the risk of a point of order being raised in the provincial Council that the bill required previous sanction.

Sir J. Simon : What about private Bills ?

Witness : Ordinarily these are submitted through the local Government, but may be sent up direct to the Government of India.

Sir J. Simon : Has there been any instance in which the provincial legislature passed a bill which on subsequent investigation, was found to require previous sanction ?

—Witness : There have been one or two instances.

Q : Do in fact large number of bills come up for sanction ?

Witness : Very large number. The section is really too wide and it is extremely difficult to narrow it definitely. We have sent proposals to the Secretary of State for having the rule making power to give us elasticity in the matter. But we learn that he will take up the matter when revision of the Act takes place.

Sir John Simon : Has there been many cases in which sanction has been refused ?

Mr. Graham : Sanction to provincial bills has never been refused, because the Government of India negotiate with the provincial governments and they come to an agreed form for the bill. But as regards non-official bills sanction have been refused frequently. It has been refused in about 35 cases

Sir John Simon : This device that certain bills can be introduced only after previous sanction becomes necessary because the constitution of British India, as at present framed, does not really make strict distribution of Legislative power. Of course, if you were to provide for some federal system in which you say, certain powers are central and others provincial, then this sort of previous sanction would be less important while under the present system it may be of considerable importance. Witness : I think the experience in Canada is it leads to litigation. We have this as the alternative device.

Sir John Simon : Then you regard this sort of division as being an alternative to settlement which leads to litigation. Has any case arisen in which the province passed legislation referring to territory beyond its control ?—Witness : No.

Mr. Graham further explained that even in cases where previous sanction was not required, local Government in pursuance of executive order would send up on important subjects their legislative proposals to the Government of India for the latter's exercise of any powers of superintendence, direction and control. If the bill merely dealt with a reserved subject, it would not require sanction but the dividing line was difficult and mostly they covered central sphere in requiring powers to enforce law.

Sir John Simon : I gather you to say the method on whole works all right. Sometimes bills are given necessary leave to proceed, sometimes they are not and you want rule-making power to get over the rigidity of law.

Witness : We try to maintain the division of subjects between the Central and Provincial Governments.

Sir John Simon pointed out that the Government of India had power to cancel any laws made by a provincial Government.

Mr. Graham said no case had arisen where this power had been exercised.

Sir John Simon : It may arise for two reasons, firstly, where necessity has arisen for uniform law and secondly, as a situation had arisen in Canada where the Central Government for reasons of policy wishes to support one policy even though the legislature has passed a law otherwise. For instance, the legislation by British Columbia against the Chinese or the Japanese may be cancelled by the central authority for reasons of broader policy.

Witness : No such case has arisen in India.

Sir John Simon : Section 72 gives emergency powers to promulgate an ordinance which may last six months. From the point of view of constitutional enquiry, it is a rather interesting section. Has it been used and is it needed ?

Mr. Graham : It is used and I think it is needed. In the first place, India is a very large country and it is not easy to get members of legislature together at short notice. There was, for instance, the case of Moplah rebellion and the Central Legislature had three months before it was to meet normally and an ordinance had to be promulgated at once and martial law declared.

Sir John : Did that involve the passing of what would otherwise have been legislation ?—Mr. Graham : It involved the setting up of special courts and empowering military authority to take special action.

Sir John Simon : Has there been any instance when a legislature has subsequently made any strong protest against ordinance-making power ?

Mr. Graham : In one case, it certainly was, the Bengal Ordinance which dealt with anarchical conspiracy.

Sir John Simon : Then this thing is used and, as I should have expected, it is open to criticism.

Sir John Simon : Under section 43-A, the Governor-General may appoint Coun-

cil Secretaries to assist the Executive Councillors. Has it been used and what would be the possible application of it ?

Witness : I think the intention was to give some acquaintance of working of the central machine to politicians, to induce some unofficials to join as permanent supporters of the Government. It was a chance for young men.

Sir John Simon : What strikes one is that the system might work in the provinces where elected members could be deputies of Ministers, but you have no ministers in the Central Government. What is the Council Secretary to do ?

Witness : He would be admitted as a sort of honorary member of the Department. He might, to some extent, relieve the permanent Secretary of his duties in the Assembly.

Sir John Simon : The Joint Select Committee, in their report, stated that they wanted Council Secretaries to undertake the duties of Parliamentary Under-Secretary, but that his function and departments to which he would be attached would be entirely within the discretion of the Governor-General. Speaking with the greatest possible respect about the Joint Committee's views, what occurs to one is that a Parliamentary Under Secretary has his ministerial chief, while here it would mean an Under-Secretary without a Minister.

Witness : The idea certainly was that Council Secretaries could be extra hands for giving replies on behalf of the Department.

Lord Burnham suggested that this was probably on the analogy of the House of Lords where a member not attached to the department got up a departmental case for replying in the Lords

Sir John Simon said when he was Home Secretary they had no one in the Lords to discharge the duties of the Home Office and the late Lord Curzon agreed to be their spokesman and Sir John had the unusual experience of suggesting to Lord Curzon what he should say in the Lords. "But I think the Joint Committee were misled as the analogy is not clear."

Witness : The matter was discussed in the first Assembly, but political parties felt the Government would cut off some members of their groups and Mr. Spence had practically no support at all and while this was the opinion of the co-operating Assembly, the opposition was greater in the succeeding two Assemblies.

Lord Burnham : Then they lost an opportunity for political education ?

Viscount Burnham drew the attention of the Conference to the fact that a peculiar feature was the extraordinary growth of convention outside the four corners of the Government of India Act, such as fiscal convention, separation of Railway from General finance, discussion during demands on non-votable expenditure, annual standing committees of departments and Standing Finance Committee. He thought if one was disposed to criticise in unfriendly manner this would be considered an encroachment on the Act and in one sense of ignoring limitations imposed by the Imperial Parliament on the powers and functions of the legislature.

Mr. Graham replied : "In every question of conventions we examine the proposed line of action very carefully and make sure that we are not definitely infringing the provisions of the Act or the rules thereunder. It was from this point of view that separation of Railway from general finance was examined and our conscience is very clear.

Viscount Burnham then alluded to the discussion by the Assembly of army expenditure and asked how when the expenditure on defence was non-votable this could be appropriately discussed by the Assembly.

Mr. Graham explained that the grant for the Army Department which was a voted subject was closely linked up with Army and it was impossible to say at any stage when a speaker was irrelevant. Distinction was not very rigid and the Act itself allowed the Governor-General to throw open defence for general discussion.

Viscount Burnham : Consequentially the member in charge answers questions on non-votable expenditure even though there is no vote before the Houses.

Mr. Graham : It really amounts to that.

Q : Therefore indirectly the Assembly exercises by these means an influence on military expenditure, if not to the same extent as on the voted portion, at least to a large extent even though it is shut out under the Government of India Act.

Mr. Graham : It is difficult to say how much.

Viscount Burnham : Is it the deliberate policy of the Government to acquiesce in it?—Mr. Graham : Yes. We get positive direction from the Governor-General for throwing open Army portion of the budget for general discussion.

Viscount Burnham : So it is not true to say that the Assembly is debarred from discussing defence?—Mr. Graham : Not true.

Proceeding, Mr. Graham supplemented by Mr. Dunnett explained to the conference in answer to Viscount Burnham that the Public Accounts Committee dealt with questions whether expenditure had been made with due regard to canons of financial propriety and it was the Standing Finance Committee which generally dealt with the policy and as for military appropriation report, this was first discussed by an *ad hoc* committee consisting of army experts and then the Public Accounts Committee and the remarks of the latter were incorporated in its report and placed in the library and was open to discussion in the Assembly.

Viscount Burnham : My point is this, that by these indirect means and by using finance as a weapon for this purpose, the Assembly has obtained power and deals with non-votable expenditure almost to the same degree as voted expenditure.

Mr. Graham : Not so far as that.

Col. Lane-Fox examined Mr. Graham regarding the unwieldy nature of general constituencies for the Assembly. Mr. Graham explained that the Central Government had nothing to do with the machinery of elections which was a provincial subject. Distinction between rural and urban representation had latterly assumed great prominence in provincial legislatures but no such effort was made in the Central Legislature. But it was true that there were seven urban constituencies for the Assembly. Otherwise urban and rural population were collective figures in the general constituencies. Landowners and landlords were a considerable element in the Assembly.

Questioned by Mr. Cadogan, witness said that the power to disallow a resolution was vested both in the President and finally with the Viceroy. The chances of overlapping of provincial subjects were very rare, for really provincial matters were discussed in local councils.

Answering Dr. Gour, Mr. Graham said that the Home Department, although it laid down the policy for law and justice, did not necessarily have a lawyer as a member in charge.

Q : Has there been any conflict between your Department and the Home Department relating to the subject of law and order?

Mr. Graham : I don't see how the question of conflict can arise. The major question or policy is decided in the Viceroy's Executive Council where there might be difference of opinion. But of that I am not cognisant.

Sardar Shivdev Singh Uberoi was told that provincial governments were responsible for revision of electoral rolls. The Conference then adjourned.

#### DELHI—24th. NOVEMBER, 1928

Sir Geoffrey Corbett, Commerce Secretary and Mr. G. S. Bajpai, Education Secretary to the Government of India, were examined to-day by the Simon Conference, which held a half-a-day's session.

Examined by Sir John Simon, Sir Geoffrey Corbett said the Commerce Department performed practically the same functions as the Board of Trade did in England. They dealt with shipping, marine, commercial treaties and tariffs. And the High Commissioner's office was administratively under them. The Chief Commissioner, Railways, was the Secretary for Railways. But both the witnesses and the Chief Commissioner had constant consultations, and visited ports together when common questions arose.

Sir John Simon read extracts from the Joint Parliamentary Committee's report stating that there was nothing more likely to injure the good relations between Great Britain and India than the feeling that fiscal decisions were taken in the interest of Great Britain and therefore a convention be established that where the Government of India and the Central Legislature agreed on fiscal matters the Secretary of State's interference should be limited to matters relating to safeguarding of international or imperial obligations and asked the witness : "Tell me if the convention is well defined. Has it in practice been observed?"

Sir Geoffrey Corbett : I think both the Secretary of State and ourselves have done our best to co-operate in giving the convention real life. Difficulties may arise, but we have always met each other and I think the present position reached by the convention is entirely in accordance with the spirit of the Joint Committee's recommendation.

Sir John Simon : Then this convention has been observed with goodwill on both sides. Tell us specifically about the present position of India with regard to tariffs.

Witness : We have several opportunities of testing the convention over the Tariff Board's reports. When we receive a report, we consider it and the provisional conclusions formed by the Government of India are sent to the Secretary of State for his observations and in a majority of cases, the Secretary of State says that he has no observations to make but when he makes a suggestion we consider it before taking the final action on the report. But it has been tacitly understood that the remarks that the Secretary of State makes are mere suggestions for our consideration, and he has never tried to force his views upon us. And when we place our views before the legislature, and if it is accepted by the legislature, the convention comes into play. Witness next explained the functions of the Tariff Board, and how cases for enquiry are referred to it.

Sir John Simon asked whether there had been any case hitherto in which protection granted was withdrawn, and the industry concerned had been able to face world competition without further help.

Witness explained that the Tariff Board was set up in 1924 only, and in the case of the steel industry, the bounty originally granted had been already withdrawn and the tariff duty substantially reduced. The tariff proposals, generally, were dealt with in a separate bill and not in the Finance Bill. This enabled the Assembly to give its opinion on clear cut issue.

Sir John Simon : Has there been in fact on the part of the Secretary of State some intervention which prevented a proposal which the Government of India would otherwise have put forward about tariffs?—Witness : There has been no such case. Every proposal for protection we put forward before the Assembly has been carried. The Assembly has confirmed our proposals.

Q : Did that happen about the Steel Bill of 1927 ?

Witness : Yes, except that the proposal of differential rates between the British and Continental steel was characterised by some members of the Assembly as the introduction of Imperial preference by the backdoor which it was not.

Sir John Simon : How would the fact of a lower duty on British steel be held as imperial preference?—Witness : British steel is of a higher quality than continental steel, and the latter is very much cheaper and it is competing with Indian-made steel, and by having differential duties, the Tariff Board put both on the same footing for the purpose of competition with Indian steel.

Questioned by Sir Arthur Froom, Sir Geoffrey said that the Trade Commissioner was working under the High Commissioner in London, whose office was attached to the Commerce Department here. Though the Tariff Board came under the Commerce Department, there was no question of the latter imposing its will on the former.

Sir Arthur Froom : What is generally the line taken in dealing with its reports?—Sir Geoffrey Corbett : We accept the Board's findings on facts, and see whether their recommendations follow naturally on those facts.

Sir Arthur Froom : In other words, the Commerce Department bring a wider view to bear on the Board's recommendations?—Sir Geoffrey Corbett : Exactly.

Sir Arthur Froom : You said that when the second Steel Protection Bill was before the Assembly, some members opposed it on the ground that it gave rise to imperial preference. Can you say that the Legislative Assembly as a whole is against imperial preference ?

Sir Geoffrey Corbett : They never expressed an opinion on the subject, but there is always great anxiety amongst certain people in India that the fiscal policy is dictated from Whitehall, and anything that smacks of imperial preference is suspected as being dictated from Whitehall.

Q Has there been any case in which the Government of India and the Assembly disagreed on matters relating to your department?—A : Yes, in the case of Mr.

Haji's Coastal Trade Reservation Bill ; but I doubt whether the Assembly will agree to discriminatory legislation of an economic character.

Sir John Simon observed : Generally speaking, the constitutional powers of the different legislative bodies may be said to raise the question whether discrimination of that sort is to be matter of complete latitude. We had a suggestion made in a province (Punjab) that there might be some provision to the effect, that no law which introduces discrimination against one community as regards its right to acquire agricultural lands should be entertained. It is important for us to know whether or not those considerations make it important to consider whether there should be any limit upon legislative powers.

Sir Arthur Froom : Suppose there is to be responsible government, can you visualise that the control of Commerce can be split up in various provinces, or should it continue to be a central subject ?

Sir Geoffrey Corbett : One can visualise anything ; but on the whole the tendency is to break down inter-state economic barriers and to work up in large economic units. If you split it up it will be a retrograde and uneconomic step.

Answering Mr. Kikabhai Premchand the witness stated that the Government had never contemplated carving out portions of cities connected with harbours and taking them under the Central Administration.

Dr. Gour next questioned the witness. He asked whether it was not the underlying principle of the Coastal Trade Bill that Indians were not now given facilities for training as officers in European company-owned vessels.

Sir Geoffrey Corbett : I think the principle of that Bill is to secure the profits of the coastal trade for Indians and the question of training Indians as officers is entirely subsidiary.

Dr. Gour : Was not the lack of facilities for training of Indians as officers the cause of the demand for an Indian Mercantile Marine ?

Sir Geoffrey Corbett : There is the "Dufferin" training-ship established after the recommendation of the Marine Committee and all the leading firms trading on the coasts of India have undertaken to take Indians trained in that ship.

Dr. Gour : No effort was made before the Reforms to train Indians as officers ?

Sir Geoffrey Corbett : Not until the "Dufferin" training-ship was started.

Dr. Gour : That was started only recently ?

Sir Geoffrey Corbett : About eighteen months ago.

Dr. Gour : Is it not a fact that according to the Selbourne Committee's recommendation in regard to the fiscal convention, that when the Government of India and the Legislature are agreed, the Secretary of State should stand aside ?

Sir John Simon : It is not correct to say that the Secretary of State should stand aside. Except in exceptional cases, he will not interfere.

Sir H. S. Gour : Has there been any case in consequence of the observations made by the Secretary of State of the Government of India modifying its tentative proposals ?

Sir Geoffrey Corbett : Modification in small details. But I can recall no case in which material alteration in principle has been made.

Dr. Gour : The Legislature has no means of knowing your original proposal and how they have been modified as a result of the Secretary of State's observations.—A : No.

Q : Is there not a complaint that the Government of India which is subject to supervision, direction and control of the Secretary of State has no power of deciding for itself in upholding the fiscal convention ?

A : I may say we frequently do not accept his observations.

Q : Regarding the second Steel Bill was it not the sense of the Assembly that imperial preference as such must be a matter of contract between India and England and that England cannot force any indirect manner of imperial preference upon India ?—A : That is right.

Proceeding, the witness said that it was a fact that opinion was expressed in the legislature that imperial preference must be a matter of contract between India and England. This point of view was expressed in connection with cinema films, and the leader of the Swaraj Party in the Council of State expressed that there should be an agreement that Empire films should circulate among the



various parts of the Empire in order that one part might understand the others better.

Dr. Gour : Consequently, India is not opposed to imperial preference ?

Sir Geoffrey Corbett : I never suggested that.

Dr. Gour : And the steel protection was carried by a small majority ?

Sir Geoffrey Corbett : I think by a majority of six.

Sir Zulfiqar Ali : With regard to imperial preference, was there any correspondence between the Government of India and the Secretary of State ?

Sir Geoffrey Corbett : No, not in connection with steel. There was correspondence only once in regard to the subject of imperial preference discussed at the Imperial Conference.

Sir Zulfiqar : Are the Government of India considering the matter ?—A : No.

Sir Arthur Froom : Do you, as Commerce Secretary make extensive tours in order to be in touch with commercial opinion ?

Sir Geoffrey Corbett : Yes.

Q : Legislation affecting commerce is never made without consulting commercial opinion both European and Indian ?—A : That is so.

Q : The Commerce Department is not merely administered from the tops of Simla ?—A : No, we are very much in touch with commercial opinion.

Lord Strathcona : In the matter of conventions with other countries are these negotiated through the Foreign Office on behalf of the Government and if so, is it in any way detrimental to the interests of India ?

Sir Geoffrey Corbett : Very much to our benefit. We have received very useful advice and assistance from the Foreign Office.

Proceeding, the witness explained the representation now obtaining of commercial bodies in the Assembly. There was undoubtedly a feeling of antagonism between Indian and European Trade in the Assembly.

Sir John Simon looking into the figures remarked : "I find an arrangement seems to have been made under the Montford Reforms that as there is every chance of European members coming to the Assembly generally from the European commercial community, there is no special need of providing for representation of European commercial bodies in that House and therefore Indian commercial bodies are found represented in it while European commercial bodies are represented in the Upper House."

Sir Geoffrey Corbett : I have speculated upon this myself very often. That may have been the position.

Sir Arthur Froom interrupting remarked : But the European Chambers of Commerce have held that they should have seats in the Assembly.

Sir John Simon : We might hear of it from the Associated Chambers of Commerce. But I don't see how we can easily produce a cut and dried scheme.

Dr. Gour : Was there not a feeling before the cotton excise duty was abolished that it had been imposed under dictation from Whitehall ?

Sir Geoffrey Corbett : That was so.

### Evidence Of Mr Bajpai

Mr. G. S. Bajpai, Education Secretary, was next examined.

Sir John Simon referred to the Devolution Rule 49, which lays down the spheres in which the Central Government can interfere in the transferred field and asked : "Has a necessity arisen for the use of this Devolution Rule ?"—Mr. Bajpai : I have been in this department now for six years, and I don't remember a single instance in which we had to exercise our powers under the Devolution Rule.

Sir John Simon : Primary education is dealt with by the Provincial Governments. Do they have intervention or assistance from the Government of India ?

Witness : The only occasion would be when Local Governments submit to the Governor-General for his assent to their Bills regarding primary education.

Sir John Simon : Supposing the Education Department in one province desires to communicate with the corresponding Ministerial Department in another. Have they to do it through the Government of India or can they do it direct ?

Witness : They communicate direct.

Sir John Simon : Education being a transferred provincial subject, the legislatures

deal with it without the intervention of the Central Government, and as their funds are not derived from the Central Government, so the Central Government has no control?—Witness : No.

Sir John Simon : It may not be a fair question to ask. I do not know whether in your experience you think it is a satisfactory arrangement or one you would like to see altered?

Mr. Bajpai : I will express my own opinion that the system is not very satisfactory. It seems to me that primary education is not in particular an obligation of the provinces as it is the obligation of India as a whole. You might call it a national obligation. Whereas I would never for a minute postulate that the Government of India should actually interfere in the administration of primary education, I should like to see a state of affairs in which the Government of India would be able to stimulate primary education by grants-in-aid. They cannot do so at present.

Sir John Simon : We will hear something about it when we have the Hartog Report. We are having an important deputation of Anglo-Indians on Monday. The suggestion has been mooted that European and Anglo-Indian education be centralized.

Witness : It has been urged since 1921, and the four arguments in its support given by its supporters are that it would lead to efficiency and uniformity, put it on a more liberal and stable basis and thereby prevent waste through overlapping, and remove the question from the arena of racial and political controversies in the provinces. The arguments against it are that owing to the vastness of the country it is impossible to ensure either unity or efficiency of control, and that far from removing it from the arena of controversy, you will be transferring it to the arena of controversy in the Assembly. The third argument which occurs to me is that one of the objects which Europeans and Anglo-Indians in India have is that they should become an integral part of the bulk community in India. Education represents the formative stage when you can, to some extent, establish or stimulate the process of integration. If you are going to cut yourself off from the educational system in force for other communities, how are you to obtain this end?

Sir John Simon : That summarises the pros and cons.

Mr. Bajpai : In January, 1927, we had a conference of Provincial Educational Administrators. They discussed this question among others and I think their unanimous opinion was against centralisation.

Sir John Simon requested the witness to supply the report of the conference.

Col. Lane Fox was informed by the witness that some very important branches of research were under the Government of India.

Col. Lane Fox : You say you have agricultural research under you. But at the Lyallpur College, too, considerable research is going on under the provincial Government.—Witness : I am glad to know that.

Sir John Simon pointed out that research was being conducted in the world by interchange of special investigators between one country and another. Similar interchange occurred between the dominions and Britain. Were similar steps taken in India?—Mr. Bajpai said they had the same objective, but there had yet been no interchanges as such but in the medical sphere particularly, they had benefitted by Membership of International Association in Paris and Membership of the Health Committee of the League of Nations.

Sir John Simon : You look at research as a thing to be organised from the centre rather than as a thing to be distributed among the Provinces?—Witness : Yes ; but provinces are not prevented from undertaking their own research.

Sir Zulfiqar Ali asked whether any tangible results had been produced or whether they would not like to be mere enterprising.—Witness : We are doing our very best.

Sir Zulfiqar suggested that some intelligent farmers be given lessons at these institutes for the benefit of the rural population.

Mr. Bajpai said that research was an advanced subject, and such experiment could be done by the province only at their experimental farms. Witness further examined explained the functions of the Educational Commissioner.

Sarder Shivdev Singh was informed by Mr. Bajpai that the progress made in compulsory education so far had been limited. The Conference then adjourned.

DELHI—26th NOVEMBER 1928

A deputation of the Anglo-Indian community consisting of Col. Gidney, M. L. A., Mr. L. T. Maguire, M. L. C., (Bengal), Mr. E. T. McClusky, M. L. C., (Bengal) Rev. W. A. Hobson from Madras, Mr. C. G. Balerop and Mr. Curtis from Agra, and Rev. C. C. Rogers from Jubbulpore, headed by the first named, was examined by the Simon Joint Free Conference this morning.

Examined by Sir John Simon, Col. Gidney stated that the status of the Statutory Natives of India was imposed upon them by a statute of the Imperial Parliament, and they had accepted this. He contended however that in accepting this position as Statutory Natives of India, they were not called upon to abandon their individuality as a community. He referred the Conference to Earl Winterton's definition of their status.

The Chairman elicited that Anglo-Indians were eligible for recruitment to the Indian army as Indians, but could not gain admission to the British Army and that the memorandum had been written before the Government of India had received a reply to the Anglo-Indian community's representations to the Sec. of State.

Sir John Simon : You say that on account of your double position, you are treated prejudicially both by Europeans and by Indians

Colonel Gidney further stated that Anglo-Indians could not obtain admission to the officer ranks of the Army.

Sir John Simon : The Anglo-Indian claims service on the basis of his being an Indian, and not on the basis of his being a European. —Col. Gidney : That is the only basis on which we can enter the army, and I do not object to it.

Sir John Simon : Cannot an Anglo-Indian enter Sandhurst by nomination ?

Col. Gidney : Yes, but he cannot enter the British Army.

Sir John Simon wanted to know if the same figures had been supplied to the Secretary of the State with their representation as had been given in their present memorandum to the Commission. Colonel Gidney could not say, if it was so.

Col. Gidney stated that on their representation the Secretary of State had asked the Government of India to supply him with statistical information with regard to his community, but the Government of India had informed him that they were unable to do so.

Sir John Simon : You mean they were asked to go into details, but obviously they had no machinery to do so. It appears to me, Col. Gidney, from what you say in your memorandum that your problem is more an economic and social problem rather than a constitutional one.

Col. Gidney : Yes, but we want statutory provision for safeguarding our economic rights for a number of years. We have been sitting happily in the lap of the Government of India and were not prepared for this change. All that we ask is that a few years of grace be given to us in which we can acclimatize ourselves to the changed conditions.

Sir John : Economic difficulties, as such, are not susceptible of change by a change in the constitutional structure. Can you tell us what exactly is the form in which you suggest this protection of the rights of your community can be secured ? How would it affect the constitutional structure or the language of the Government of India Act or the statutory rules made under it ?

Col. Gidney : I will have to make a specific claim for my community. I suggest that statutory provision be made by which the Anglo-Indian community be protected economically for a limited period of 50 or 30 years during which time they would be able to fit themselves educationally, and at the end of that period they would fall into line with the rest of the Indian communities.

Sir John Simon : If you contemplate some statutory provision which can be inserted in the statute so as to have legal application, would you tell us the language in which such a clause should be couched ?

Col. Gidney suggested a repetition and reiteration of para 346 of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report, which made protection of Anglo-Indian interests a special charge on the Government of India.

Sir John Simon : I only want your help and suggestions.

Mr. Vernon Hartshorn suggested that what Colonel Gidney wanted was that

a specific provision be made by which it would be ensured that the number of Anglo-Indians employed on railways and in other All-India services would not be reduced.

Sir John Simon : I have a great deal of sympathy with what you have said, but it is a constitutional problem and I must tell you frankly I don't see exactly how a clause can be framed in the Government of India Act so as to secure non-reduction of the number of your community at present employed.

Mr. Maguire suggested that a provision, specific in nature, be included in the Instruments of Instructions.

Col. Gidney : But these instructions should be more definite because our experience in the past has been that though intention is good, practice is bad. Although the Lee Commission enacted that a certain percentage of the posts be given to Europeans and a certain percentage to Anglo-Indians these recommendations have not been followed strictly.

Col. Gidney drew the attention of the conference to the definition of "European" as given in Schedule II of the electoral rules of the Legislative Council, which liberally interpreted, could be taken to include the entire Anglo-Indian community and this resulted in 50 per cent of the Anglo-Indians being registered as Europeans. Thus the elasticity of this rule deprived Anglo-Indians of some of their votes.

Sir Arthur Froom : Is there an appreciable demand among the members of your community for recruitment as private British soldiers considering that the prospects of private soldiers in the British army are poor ?

Col. Gidney : We consider this as a deliberate insult to our community.

Sir Arthur Froom : Your community is one of many Indian communities in this country ?—A : Yes.

Q : Could you tell us whether there has been any attack in legislation against your community ?—Col. Gidney : Ever since I have been in the Assembly it has been pointed out by questions and resolutions that Indian colleagues as a whole are not sympathetic to our demands.

Q : In the letter from the Secretary of State to the Government of India in September last, there is some suggestion that Anglo-Indian interests would be safeguarded in railways etc. Are you satisfied with that suggestion ?

A : Yes. If it is put into practice ?

Q : Do you want that something should be inserted in the future Government of India Act to provide for special employment of Anglo-Indians in all those departments in which at present they are employed in considerable numbers ?—A : Yes.

Q : What would happen if all the minority communities, for example, the Sikhs wanted similar provision in the statute for protection of their interests ?

A : For the other big communities it is not a question of any importance. They can settle it amongst themselves. But they completely ignore the interests of Anglo-Indians. It is therefore Anglo-Indians only who require such protection.

Col. Gidney pointed out that in the scheme of Indianisation Anglo-Indians were being replaced by Indians. "If I am a native of India how can I be replaced by another Indian when I am discharging my duties all right ?" By this distinction between Indians and Anglo-Indians, Col. Gidney said, the Government was creating unnecessary cleavage.

Sir John Simon summed up that what Col. Gidney meant was that Europeans did not acknowledge them as Europeans and Indians did not acknowledge them as Indians with the result that Anglo-Indians lost their share of appointments both ways.

Col. Gidney wanted a jury of Anglo-Indians for the trial of Anglo-Indians.

Mr. Kikabhai Premchand : You say that Indians are hostile to your interests. Can you say why it is so ?

Col. Gidney : It is partially due to us, and partially due to others.

Q : Is it not due to the supercilious attitude of Anglo-Indians towards the Indians ?

A : If this question had been put ten years ago, I would have said "yes" ; but to-day this superciliousness is practically dead.

Q : Would you be content to be treated as Indians ?

A : I shall be contented to remain an Indian with certain safeguards.

Q : You say that for a certain period Anglo-Indians should be admitted to the

superior railway services without any qualification bar. Don't you think it would affect the efficiency of the service ?

A : I do not think so.

Q : You ask that Rs. 50 lakhs be capitalised for a period of thirty years for Anglo-Indian education. Do you know what would be the value of Rs. 50 lakhs capitalised for thirty years ?—A : No.

Sir John intervening explained that what Col. Gidney meant was that Rs. 50 lakhs be invested for 30 years so as to find scholarships for Anglo-Indians during that period.

Q : You say that law and order should not be transferred to the charge of Indian Ministers. Can you give an instance where the Home Membership of an Indian has failed ?

A : I believe it failed in C. P., at any rate towards the end of that member's tenure.

Questioned by Raja Nawab Ali, Col. Gidney stated that a second chamber should be constituted of nominated members, and the Central Legislature should be subordinated to the executive.

Lord Burnham : Would it be fair to say that you attribute a good deal of your present plight to the fact that the Government of India has accelerated Indianisation of the superior railway services very much beyond the number laid down in the Lee Commission's recommendations ?—Col. Gidney concurred.

Sir John read out the figures of the census report of 1921 which showed that Anglo-Indians numbered about  $1\frac{1}{4}$  lakhs in British India and Indian States. Sir John Simon compared the number of nominated and elected seats allotted to Anglo-Indians in the different provinces with their numerical strength in those province as given in the census report.

Col. Gidney was not inclined to agree with the correctness of the figures of the census report and said that his community numbered at least 25 per cent more than the figures given in the report.

Sir John Simon asked Mr. Maguire to explain how the elections were held in his constituency.—Mr. Maguire gave the details asked for.

Col. Gidney and Mr. Maguire both wanted adult suffrage for their community.

Sir John Simon asked Col. Gidney how the constituencies of Anglo-Indians would be made up.—It was suggested that two or more provinces could be combined from one constituency.

Col. Gidney further informed the chairman that all the members of his community whether, male or female, could read.

Major Attlee asked Col. Gidney if he expected a similar increase of the numbers of his community as had happened during the last census period.

Col. Gidney replied in the affirmative.

Lord Strathcona : Since you did not accept the census figures, have you made any representation to the Government whereby greater accuracy and fairness to your community may be secured ?—Col. Gidney : I have refrained from doing so because the Statutory Commission was coming.

### Deputation of Indian Christians.

The deputation of the Indian Christian community led evidence late in the afternoon. It was headed by Mr. H. I. Ralliam, President of the All-India Christian Conference, and consisted also of Rev. Chatterjee, M.L.C. (Bengal), Mr. K. L. Ralliam, President, Punjab Provincial Christian Conference, and Mr. Ahmed Shah, M.L.C. United Provinces. At the outset Sir John congratulated the deputation on their admirably written memorandum.

The Chairman heard from Mr. Ralliam the detailed views of the deputation on the scheme formulated for the composition of the Central Legislature with special reference to the Christian community's representation on it. There was at present no statutory provision for Indian Christians in the Council of State. The deputation suggested that in the Council of State, of the eleven elected members, three should be allotted for Christians. In the Assembly of the 300 elected representatives, Christians should have nine. Three of the seats should go to Madras where the Indian Christian element was large. Then in the provinces also the scheme

suggested enlarged Councils and in Madras they wanted five seats, in the Punjab seven, in U. P. four, in Bengal five, in Bombay five and in Central Provinces two. But this did not mean that the deputation wanted separate electorates. Mr. Ralliarum and his colleagues made it clear that the deputation was against communal or separate electorates.

Answering Sir John Simon on this point, the principal witness said : "In the first place we advocate that communal electorates should be abolished without any reservation. But in case it is not done, and if seats are to be reserved, then we want our community to be represented in the manner we have indicated.

Mr. Chatterjee : The majority of our community are prepared to have a general electorate in the interests of the nation as a whole.

Sir John Simon : So, the Indian Christian community as represented by you, takes the view that its higher duty is to seek to represent and share the feelings of all generally in the country ?—Mr. Ralliarum : That is exactly our point.

Q : Those who become Indian Christians come mostly from the depressed class ?

A : Yes.

Q : When a member of the depressed class becomes a convert does he cease to be called a depressed class man ?

A : We don't admit caste in our community. There is a tendency among some to classify such people for some time in the depressed class category but very soon they get out of it. There is no such thing as an Indian Christian depressed class.

Sir John Simon : The question merely is whether a man who becomes a convert from the depressed class is regarded as still belonging to it.

Mr. Ralliarum : No. He might be a convert from the depressed class, but he does not belong to the depressed class.

Questioned by Mr. Cadogaon, the witness said that Roman Catholics had their own separate organisation from the All-India Christian Conference and after consideration they came to the conclusion that they should abstain from joining this deputation. But it must be remembered that their conference had a limited number of Roman Catholics as well. Witness added : "Though religiously we are divided, we are politically one unit." Mr. Ahmedshah informed Major Attlee that the members of the community living even in rural areas were taking an interest in their proceedings and knew what they were working for.

Major Attlee : Do you find that your members are able to exercise their franchise well ?—Mr. Ralliarum : Oh, yes.

Q : You have not found that the exercise of the vote in your various religious organisations has led to any schisms ?

Mr. Chatterjee : In some churches they begin by party feeling, but this is all soon overcome with the process of education as time goes on.

Viscount Burnham : You said that there is only a small portion of the Roman Catholic population with which you work in these political matters.

Mr. Ralliarum : Roman Catholics have, as a community, not joined us because there is a strict priesthood who do not like individual members to exercise their discretion in these matters.

Viscount Burnham : You state in your memorandum that a large amount of money is spent in election and that all forms of corruption should be guarded against.—Mr. Chatterjee : That is a matter of common knowledge.

Sir John Simon : You speak of corruption. What is money spent on ?

Mr. Ralliarum : It is spent on entertaining voters. In some cases votes are bought.

Q : By payment of money ?—A : In some form or other.

Proceeding, Sir John Simon analysed the figures of the Christian population in British India, and excluded from it those Europeans who were also Christians and also Anglo-Indians. And when he was eliminating from this figure the Roman Catholics also, Mr. Chatterjee said, "We are not in the least desirous of separating from the Catholics. We actually believe our interests in this matter are identical. We do not want any separate electorates for ourselves.

Mr. Rajah then questioned the deputation who informed that Mr. J. C. Dutta was the only Christian who was elected by a non-Mahomedan constituency to the Corporation of Calcutta. It was difficult for Christians to get elected to municipal bodies because of the feelings between the two major communities,

Mr. Rajah : Still you are against separate electorates ?

Mr. Ralliarum : Because they are not in national interests.

Mr. Rajah : Are the Indian Christians of Madras at one with you in your demand ?

Mr. Ralliarum read out the names of those who had supported and said : I understand a memorandum has also been submitted to the Commission by the Madras Christian Association.. That will give you their views.

Q : You are against nomination of the Christian community ? Why ?

A : Because the nominated member, if he honestly supports the Government is ridiculed by the people and if he does not support Government he is pulled up by them. It is difficult both ways.

Dr. Suhrawardy : Is it not a fact that Dr. Datta who was nominated to the 2nd Assembly to represent the Christian community voted against the Government on many occasions ?

Mr. Mukherjee : Yes, his case shows that nomination is not the right procedure and the prevalent feeling among Christians is that he was not re-nominated because he voted that way.

Mr. Chatterjee, intervening, informed that he had also voted against the Government on more than one occasion.

Dr. Suhrawardy : If you hate communal representation, why do you ask for reservation of seats ?

Mr. Ralliarum : Of course, we are against communal representation. But in case you are going to have it, then we are asking for representation of our community.

Sir John Simon : Your position, as I understand, is this. It would be far better if representation is not based on communal considerations and you as a small body will gladly acquiesce in it. But you are afraid that that ideal is not likely to be realised now and so you ask not representation of some section of the Indian Christian body but of the Indian Christian body as a whole ?

Mr. Chatterjee : That is so. In a general electorate we have nothing to lose, for we shall get our right if we organise ourselves. But in a system where there is communal feeling in the forefront, we are not going to secure our representation.

Questioned by Sir Zulfiqar Ali, the principal witness said that in regard to the proportion of representation they followed the Lucknow pact, which to them appeared correct.

Dr. Gour : Are Roman Catholics in sympathy with your views ?

Mr. Mukerjee : At least they have never repudiated our views in spite of the fact that our memorandum has been widely distributed.

Dr. Gour : You are for a fair field, and for no favours either in the legislatures or in the services ?—Mr. Ralliarum : That is so, but we do not want any disabilities.

Q : And you are in favour of literate vote ?—Witness : Yes.

Mr. Kikabhai Premchand : You are asking in your memorandum for provincial autonomy. Do you think India is fit for self-Government ?

Mr. Ralliarum : It was in 1917 that the Christain Conference passed a resolution for provincial antonomy and for a considerable advance in the Central Government.

Mr. Premchand : When you say in your memorandum that Dyarchy has failed, why then do you want it in the Central Government ?

Witness : There is no other option.

Sir Arthur Froom : You say that any subject which cannot be transferred at this stage in the provinces might be controlled and directed by the Central Government. What do you mean ?

Mr. Ralliarum : This sentence was put in, because there was difference of opinion amongst ourselves in our Council whether law and order should be transferred or not. As we are here now speaking on behalf of the entire Council, we thought it necessary to give expression to that divided opinion.

Sir Arthur Froom : On what grounds do you oppose dyarchy in the provinces ?—Mr. Ralliarum : We have not got first-hand experience of the working of dyarchy, but our members of the Council have repeatedly stated so.

Mr. Mukerjee : I may say, dyarchy has failed in Bengal. It did not fail when there were capable men like Sir Surendranath Banerjee as Ministers, but in the

second term owing to the insensate opposition of the Swaraj Party against whatever the Government did—right or wrong—Dyarchy did fail. And moreover, the Ministers were not competent. Some times, we had Ministers who could not write two sentences correctly, nor answer questions which were asked by the Swarajists in quick succession. Further, they had no following. The same is the case in the present term.

Sir Sankaran Nair : If Dyarchy is to be abolished in favour of a unitary form of Government would you have further reforms or go back to the pre-Minto-Morley Reforms?—Mr. Mukerjee: Notwithstanding the failure of dyarchy, we want unrestricted provincial autonomy, including transfer of law and order.

Mr. Ahmedshah said that Christians suffered from the disability of being debarred from the army and police ranks. The Conference at this stage adjourned.

*DELHI—27th NOVEMBER 1928.*

The Joint Free Conference of the Simon Commission examined to-day Mr. A. C. McWatters, Secretary, department of Industries and Labour. Examined by Sir John Simon Mr. McWatters stated that the Department was in charge of a member of the Governor-General's Executive Council, at present Sir B. N. Mitra. He explained that certain subjects which were not suggested by the name of the Department were also administered by them. The Industries portfolio included the Posts and Telegraphs Departments, Stock purchase for the Central Government and the Central Public Works, as also the Irrigation Department, which was a provincial reserved subject.

The Chairman asked him to explain the relation between the Central and Provincial Government with regard to Industries and Labour legislation. Mr. McWatters informed the Conference that certain branches of this kind of legislation, for example, with regard to electricity, settlement of disputes and industrial insurance, were done provincially, but in certain other branches it was the Central Legislature which enacted such legislation.

Sir John Simon explained to the Conference that the Government of India Act provided a list of subjects under this head which were to be legislated for by Provincial Legislatures and a list of those which were to be legislated for by the Central Legislature, but in either case, whether it was the Central Legislature or a Provincial Legislature, it had to obtain the sanction of the Governor-General before it could make or take into consideration any such legislation.

Sir John Simon further invited the attention of the Conference to a proviso in the Government of India Act, whereby the Governor-General could, if he thought it expedient in the public interest, declare the development of Industries a Central subject, although it appeared in the list of Provincial transferred subjects.

Sir John Simon to Mr. Mc Watters : Can you give us any case where such a declaration has been made?—A : It was made in the case of the iron and steel industries in order to enable the Central Government to provide bounties for those industries. It was also done in the case of steel rails and railway wagons.

Viscount Burnham : Could not the Provincial Legislatures legislate in the same field.

Sir John Simon : A Provincial Legislature can legislate, but it cannot do so without the previous sanction of the Governor-General. There is really a great deal of confusion about the distribution of legislative power between the Central and Provincial Legislatures. The true position, as I understand it, is this that subject to the qualification a previous sanction of the Governor-General, the Provincial and Central Legislatures can both legislate in respect of industrial subjects within their territorial boundaries. Under the Canadian constitution there is a true distribution of legislative power between the Dominion Legislature and the Provincial Legislatures. But has there been any attempt from the provinces to get the leave of the Governor-General to legislate about subjects which had been declared Central subjects?

Mr. Mc Watters : In 1924 the Government of Bombay asked for permission to enact a Trade Disputes Bill for that province but permission was refused because the Government of India was thinking of legislating centrally in this regard.

Sir John Simon termed this arrangement of certain subjects being transferred



provincial and yet subject to the Governor-General's previous sanction for legislation as a very ingenious constitution.

I find that a Mines Act was enacted in 1901 but I find there were no restrictions to the employment of children and women under-ground?—Yes, but there is a proposal before the Government of India which will provide for the elimination of women and children as underground workers in a number of years.

I understand from the memorandum that the introduction of electricity in factories led to a steady increase in working hours until in certain mills in Bombay workers worked for fourteen and a half hours. Was not this limited by law?—There was a limitation for women and children.

Sir John Simon : What is the limit of hours for a daily worker ?

Mr. Mcwatters : Eleven hours, with an hour's rest.

Now let us take the Washington Convention. Has the record of India with regard to this convention been good?—Yes, it was made the basis of the new Factory's Act.

How are the provision of Labour laws enforced?—Inspectors of factories are appointed to work under provincial administrations, and they send their reports to the Central Government.

The arrangement is that the central authority legislates and the provincial authorities administer the provisions. Of that only a report is sent from the provinces. How the inspections have got on I do not know. If you are able to tell me whether these laws are enforced and observed?—I think they are observed and enforced.

You regard this as a satisfactory arrangement—that one authority should make laws and another authority should see that they are carried out?—I think under present conditions that is the best arrangement possible.

Viscount Burnham then examined Mr. Mc Watters on India's relations with the International Labour Organization.

I should like to ask you whether India would be content to remain in the category of backward industrial countries?—The answer is in the negative.

Is it the case that India has a permanent place on the governing body of the International Labour Organization?—Yes, the High Commissioner for India represents India on that body.

Is it possible for India herself to make an advance on the question of hours of labour?—There has been no proposal officially for introducing legislation for shorter hours, but to put India on equality with other countries the International Organization would require on the part of India a change of present conditions.

There are labour bureaus in the provinces?—There is one in Bombay, in Madras there is a Labour Commissioner, in Bengal there is an organization.

Is it a fact that in regard to the administration of Acts based on convention the Government of India gives any guarantee that the law is properly carried out?—We have responsibility for seeing that the law is carried out in regard to any convention to which we have agreed.

You are aware that any country which does not properly carry out any convention to which it has agreed can be brought before the International High Court of Justice?—There has been no occasion for that, because we have taken great care that the convention is properly carried out.

Are these laws executed to your satisfaction?—Yes.

Replying to Colonel Lane-Fox, Mr. McWatters stated that since the Reforms more interest had been taken in the condition of labour.

Colonel Lane-Fox : It has been suggested to us that irrigation might be a provincial transferred subject. What would be the effect of this transfer?—That is a difficult question. Our control is principally exercised in two ways—the provincial Governments have to send to the Government of India for sanction all projects costing more than Rs. 50 lakhs. The Government of India have to obtain the sanction of the Secretary of State but along with the proposal is sent the opinion of the Central Irrigation Board which consists of the Consulting Engineer to the Government of India and the Chief Engineers of all provinces. I think personally that the Secretary of State's sanction might be done away with but provincial Governments must submit their schemes for examination by the Central Irrigation Board.

Mr. McWatters, proceeding, stated that 10 per cent. of the posts of engineers

in the Irrigation Department are filled by recruitment from England by the Secretary of State.

Proceeding, he stated that there were nine factory inspectors, who worked under a Chief Inspector of Factories. In case of accidents of a serious nature special boards, with magistrates as chairmen, were appointed to investigate the causes of the accident.

At this stage the Conference terminated and concluded its Delhi programme.

*(FOR FURTHER PROCEEDINGS SEE 1929 VOL. 1)*

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Proceedings of  
**The Legislative Assembly**

AND

**Provincial Councils**

**JULY—DEC. 1928**

# The Legislative Assembly.

AUTUMN SESSION—4TH SEPTEMBER 1928.

## ATTACK ON THE PRESIDENT.

Without a formal ceremony the Assembly met at Simla for its autumn session on the 4TH SEPTEMBER 1928. After question hour Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh moved for the adjournment of the House to repudiate the unjust, unworthy, undignified and deliberately malicious attack on the President by the "Times of India", Bombay, regardless of all decency and decorum and containing aspersions and sneers reflecting upon the conduct of the President and calculated to lower the dignity and honour of the Chair and the House.

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh explained how the matter was of urgent public importance and demanded the permission to repudiate the cowardly attack.

Mr. Iswar Saran objected to the expression "Gadding about" meaning going about much needlessly or without purpose. This was an impudent suggestion and a deliberate insult both on the Chair and the House. The matter was of public importance because the Assembly was being described in some circles as "India's Parliament". The Assembly and the Chair owed it a duty to themselves to repudiate the insult. The matter would not have been urgent if the Government of India, as soon as there had been this attack in the papers, issued a repudiation on their part in the same manner as Sir Alexander Muddiman took the occasion once to repudiate attacks made upon the Chair by another newspaper. The Publicity Department has not been utilised on the present occasion. It was all the more necessary that the Assembly of both official and non-official sides should join in repudiating a suggestion made by the "Times of India". Resentment was greater because the present occupant of the Chair commanded respect and admiration of the entire House.

Maulvi Muhammed Yakub, Deputy President, wished that he were in the chair on this occasion, (laughter) for he feared the President's modesty might stand in the way of his standing as the custodian of the honour of the House.

Mr. Crerar said he understood that motions of adjournment were made to discuss the policy of the Government. He repudiated on behalf of the Government the responsibility for this article.

Mr. Jamnadas Mehta : Do you dissociate yourself from it ?

Mr. Crerar : I expressly stated that the Government entirely disavowed any responsibility whatever for it.

### President's Ruling.

The President giving the ruling declared that this was one of the matters in which the President and the House were likely to go wrong. He had studied parliamentary procedure and precedent on the subject. He had no doubt the matter was one of definite urgent public importance but even then the President had discretionary power to disallow the motion. His study of parliamentary procedure showed that the motion for adjournment must have some relation directly or indirectly to the conduct or default on the part of the Government and must be in nature of criticism of the action of the Government. Exactly an analogous case occurred in the House of Commons when a motion for adjournment was moved to censure the "Daily Mail" and other papers for a scandalous attack on the members of the House and though the Speaker admitted the motion, he found on reflection later that the adjournment motion must have relation with the Government conduct and therefore on the Speaker's request the members of the Commons concerned withdrew the motion. The President

declared that if Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh's motion raised a question of privilege, it was definitely his opinion that no adjournment motion could be made on the subject. But he did not wish it to be understood that the House had no protection. It had the inherent right to censure the attack through a substantive motion.

### Quinine Fraud.

Colonel Gidney next moved the adjournment on the subject of quinine fraud for exposing which he thanked the "C. M. Gazette." Lives of four million people were at stake due to this fraud (a voice: who perpetrates it?)

Col. Gidney—Foreign manufacturer and the Government abets of collecting revenue on this so-called quinine. The Government's stocks of quinine for 21 years in advance and this chalk was being consumed as quinine. The matter was one of national importance.

Mr. Bajpai declared that Col. Gidney painted an imaginatively lurid picture of quinine terror and his facts were supplied by the agents of a chemist firm and had not been substantiated. There was no definiteness of issues and Col. Gidney had himself admitted that the matter was not a new one. Therefore, it could not be called urgent. Nor had it been shown what part of population consumed the adulterated quinine.

The President intervening declared that he was satisfied from Col. Gidney's speech that the matter was not of urgency and, therefore, he disallowed the motion.

After both attempts for the adjournment were disallowed, speeches were made on the deaths of Sir Alexander Muddiman and Captain Kabul Singh.

### Several Bills Introduced.

On the motion of various officials the following Bills were introduced:—

"Bill providing for the removal from British India in certain cases of persons not being Indian British subjects or subjects of states in India: Bill amending the Indian Life Assurance Companies Acts: Bill Centralising and Vesting in the Governor-General-in-Council certain operations relating to dangerous drugs and to increase and render uniform throughout British India penalties for offences relating to such operations: Bill amending the Indian Trade Unions Act: Bill providing for investigations and settlement of Trade Disputes: Bill amending Workmen's Compensation Act: Bill amending Indian Succession Act: Bill amending and repealing certain enactments: Bill amending the Indian Penal Code: Bill providing for protection of Match Industry: Bill amending the Indian Income-Tax Act and Bill amending the Madras Salt Act.

Mr. McWatters explained that the object of amending the Trade Unions Bill was that the first appeal against the Registrar's decision would lie where the Trade Union was situated and the second appeal would lie in High Courts in the Presidency towns and in Rangoon.

Sir Denys Bray introducing the Press Bill declared that there was nothing controversial in spirit in which the Bill had been designed and asked the House not to receive it in a controversial spirit (some voices: Oh). The fundamental object of the Bill was better preservation of India's interests abroad. The interests were jeopardised, almost impaired by a statement in certain quarters which intended to promote unfriendly relations. There was no provision in law to cover cases of this kind. The Assembly then adjourned.

### A SEPARATE ASSEMBLY OFFICE.

On the 5TH SEPTEMBER the Hon'ble Mr. Patel, President of the Assembly, after question time, made a comprehensive statement on the question of setting up a separate and independent Department of the Assembly. The following is the full text of his speech.—

"With the permission of the House I desire to make a statement on the question of setting up a separate and independent Department for the Assembly. As an elected President I am responsible to the Assembly and to no other authority. No President can afford to ignore or withstand the wishes of the House, either expressed or implied. It is no doubt true that he wields large con-

trolling powers and his ruling on points of order and procedure must be accepted as final, at least for the time being but it is to be remembered that after all the will he imposes upon the House is not his personal will but it is the law of the House itself and in all that the President does he is naturally restrained by a desire to have his action fully endorsed by the House as a whole. In fact, the ruling motive in his mind always is to act fairly between all parties and to give satisfaction all round.

#### Serious Handicap.

"Since I assumed charges of this office I have found the Assembly and its President labouring under a serious handicap in two essential particulars and this makes smooth and satisfactory working of the Legislative machinery very difficult. The President is an impartial interpreter and administrator of the Rules of the House. But these Rules are not made by it nor has it power to amend them to suit its requirements. They are amended from time to time by the Governor General-in-Council with the sanction of the Secretary of State and neither the Assembly nor its President has any right even to be consulted in the interpretation of the Rules. The President has to rely on the advice of the Secretary of the Assembly and in the administration thereof by the office he has to rely on the efficiency, independence and reliability of the staff and the Secretary. Every member of the House has, in the discharge of his duties to deal both with the Secretary and his staff and if he fails to get satisfaction fault is naturally laid at the door of the President who is supposed to be the controlling authority. It goes without saying that if the business of the House is to be carried on to its satisfaction the Secretary and the Staff must in some form be responsible to the House and its President and not be subordinate to any outside authority. The President must feel that he is getting independent and impartial advice from the Secretary and the staff must also feel that they are there solely to serve and further the best interests of the Assembly.

#### Present State Of Things

"As matters stand at present the Secretary of the Assembly owes no allegiance to it or to the President. He is for all practical purposes responsible to the Governor General-in-Council. In every question at issue between the Government and the representatives of the people he is bound to identify himself with the Government. He is invariably a nominated member of the House and as such he joins the party, votes with them, works for them and is one of them. Neither the Assembly nor its President has any authority over him and can, therefore, in any way control his conduct in any matter connected with the Assembly. The President cannot, in the nature of the things, therefore, regard the advice of the Secretary in connection with the business of the Assembly as coming from a wholly impartial, unbiassed and independent source and it is natural for the same reason that the Assembly should desire radical 'refers'. In the present state of things I am glad to be able to say in this connection that H. E. the Viceroy has at my request discontinued the practice of nominating the Secretary as a member of the Assembly from this session. But this, as the House will understand, is merely a palliative and the root cause of the trouble remains unaffected.

#### Staff In A Dilemma

"As regards the staff I will only make one observation. My experience is that they feel difficulty in approaching the President freely or seek his advice in the discharge of their duties lest by doing so they should run the risk of offending their official superiors to whom they are subordinate. If, therefore, the Hon'ble Members have not received the facilities, guidance and assistance they are entitled to for the proper discharge of their duties I want them to believe me when I say that it is not due to any want of will on the part of the President but to the limitation and handicaps in his way. I know that the President could be more helpful to the House if the House had the power to amend its own Rules of business. But this is out of question under the present constitution. But even under the existing circumstances he could give more facilities and convenience to the Hon'ble Members and otherwise be of greater help to them if the Secretary of

the Assembly was in fact such Secretary and the office of the Assembly was independent and unconnected with the Government of India.

#### A Revolting Idea.

"Apart from these considerations the very idea that the Secretary of the Assembly should be occupying a position of subordination not to the House but to an outside authority, is in itself revolting to say the least. It did not take me long to realise all this after I assumed the charge of the office in August 1927. The Presidents' Conference which met in the following January passed at my instance a resolution advocating the creation of a separate office for the Assembly, quite independent and unconnected with Government. I communicated that resolution to the Government of India for favourable consideration and action. No reply was forthcoming and I waited for more than a year in the hope that the Government would take some definite action in the matter. I then prepared and forwarded to them in September last a detailed scheme embodying concrete proposals for setting up a separate Department or office for the Legislative Assembly. The most essential demands contained in the scheme were three viz :—

(1) That the Assembly Office should be separated from the Legislative Department of the Government of India and be treated as an independent Department and not merely as an office attached to any Department of the Government;

(2) That its principal officers and the establishment should be under the control of the Assembly through its President;

(3) That the financial proposals of the new department should be included in the annual budget without any scrutiny by the Finance Department. The Assembly to be the final judge as to whether the proposed expenditure was necessary.

"It was known to the Government that I was very anxious to put the scheme through as soon as possible and had, therefore, expected that the Government would treat my communication as urgent and deal with it accordingly. But I heard nothing from them till about the middle of April. Following in his letter, dated the 16th April, the Secretary of the Legislative Department informed me that the Government of India had reached certain provisional conclusions on my scheme and that H. E. the Viceroy would be glad to know my views on them. When I left Delhi in March last I had personally explained to His Excellency that I did not know how the Government were going to deal with my scheme but it was necessary that the President of the Assembly and the Government should be in agreement before any despatch was sent to the Secretary of State and for that purpose I should have an opportunity of discussing the matter with him at some stage.

#### Essential Demands not Accepted.

"The Government of India found themselves unable to accept the essential demands contained in my scheme. They were of opinion that the Assembly Office must be an office attached to one of the existing Departments of the Government and not be an independent office or Department, their legal expert having advised them that the requirements of the constitution demanded that it should be linked with the Imperial Secretariat. I am unable to agree with this view of their expert. But even so, there is nothing to prevent the Government from including the new Department in the portfolio of the Governor-General, and by convention to allow it to function independently of the Government as has been done to some extent by the Punjab Government in connection with the Council Department of the Punjab Legislature.

"With regard to the second demand the Government of India were of opinion that in order that the Secretary and the establishment could run efficiently and fearlessly neither the President nor the Leader of the House should have any control over them. I fail to understand how they propose to bring this about. What is to happen to the power of punishment, suspension and dismissal, now vested in the Governor-General-in-Council? If these powers are not to be transferred to the Assembly and its President in the new arrangement they must

and will remain with the Governor-General-in-Council. In that case the separation of office has no meaning and it is not worth having.

"As for the third demand in the scheme I have been unable to understand or appreciate the reason given by the Government for its rejection.

#### President's Suggestions.

"In reply to the Secretary's letter informing me of these provisional conclusions of the Government on my scheme, I wrote back to say that I would go to Simla and discuss the whole question with His Excellency, pointing out at the same time that it was difficult for me to understand how the President was to run the show if he was to have no control whatever over the officers and the establishment of the new Department. I accordingly did so and had two interviews with His Excellency. At the second interview when the question was gone into somewhat more thoroughly the Secretary was also present. I regret to say, however, that after the conversation and correspondence no agreement was found possible.

"Let me now for the information of the House outline the main points on which the Government should in my opinion agree if the Assembly Department is to be given a substantial measure of independence of the Government of India. They are:

(1) If the Government of India maintain that they have no power to create a Department to function independently, let the new Department be included in the portfolio of the Governor-General with a view to meet the technical legal objections raised by the legal expert of the Government of India.

(2) That the principal officers of the Department should be appointed by the Governor-General on the recommendation of the President.

(3) That these officers can be dismissed or otherwise punished on an address by the Assembly to the Governor-General to that effect.

(4) That the members of the establishment should be appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Secretary.

(5) That they can be dismissed or otherwise punished by the President in consultation with the Secretary.

(6) That the financial proposals of the department prepared by the Secretary and countersigned by the President should be included in the annual financial statement as a matter of course and should be left to the Assembly to make such modifications in them as they think proper.

"I have no doubt whatever that without any amendment of the Government of India Act it is permissible to establish a separate department of the Assembly on the lines indicated above either by a Convention or by necessary delegation in that behalf as the Government choose to do so.

"I do not feel sorry, however, that negotiations have fallen through because the Assembly thereby get an opportunity to express its considered opinion on the points in dispute between me and the Government. May I, therefore, hope that the House would, before this session terminates, discuss the whole question in all its aspects and record their own conclusion? I do not know if the Government would be prepared to treat this business as official or at any rate give the Government a day for its discussion. If they are not so prepared I would request His Excellency and, indeed, I have already requested him to allow the non official time for the purpose.

"Before I close I should refer to two or three matters arising out of the correspondence I had with the Government in connection with the scheme:

(1) The Government seem to contend that the Clerk of the House of Commons and his establishment are immune from the control of the house as well as the Speaker. This is, in my opinion, a mistaken view. The clerk and other principal officers of the House are liable to dismissal on an address by the House to the Crown and the number of the staff, right of regulating the salaries, pensions, retiring allowances and fixing the age of retirement etc. are regulated and determined by a Commission with the Speaker as its Chairman. The Speaker has also the right to require the dismissal of any member of the establishment. These are some of the methods by which the House and the Speaker exercise control over the Department and the measure of independence that they enjoy



is secured to them by the House itself and can be taken away by the House at any time. Conditions in India are different and the Legislatures are endeavouring to evolve a system of separate and independent offices in their own way.

(2) In spite of the fact that no agreement has been reached between the President and the Government on the principles underlying my scheme a despatch has already been sent to the Secretary of State. I should have thought that the Government of India would have referred the points in dispute between them and the President to this House and, in fact, I had pointed out to them that if they sent a despatch without affording an opportunity to the House to express its views the House was bound to resent such action very strongly.

(3) I will add one word before I close, I regret I am not in a position to inform the House how far the provisional conclusions of the Government of India communicated to me by the Secretary in April last has been subsequently modified. I asked for a copy of the despatch to enable me to know what exactly the final attitude of the Government was in this matter. But the Government of India found themselves unable to comply with my request.

"I apologise for the length of this statement. The importance of the subject is my only excuse (loud applause)."

After the President's statement Mr. Crerar, Leader of the House, said that he had listened with close attention to the communication from the Chair. He hoped to take an early opportunity, probably to-morrow, to make a statement explaining the Government's position.

Pundit Motilal asked whether the Government would be prepared to supply the despatch to the House. Mr. Crerar replied that the Government would be unable to lay the despatch before the house.

Mr. K. Ahmed and others wanted to address questions to Mr. Crerar but the President asked them to reserve them till Mr. Crerar made the statement.

#### The Merger Scheme.

As Haji Chaudhuri Muhammed Ismail Khan was absent Mr. K. C. Roy was called upon to move the first resolution of the session. He moved :

"This Assembly recommends to the Governor-General in-Council that he be pleased to lay on the table all correspondence between the Secretary of State and the Government of India relating to cable and wireless beam merger scheme, certain conclusions of which were recently announced both in London and Simla."

Mr. Roy said that his subject though technical was of utmost national importance because India occupied a unique position being the central link in the imperial enterprise like air-ways and wireless communications. The establishment of powerful Rugby station led to rate war between wireless and cable companies and cable rates had to be reduced but the cable magnates succeeded in influencing the British Government to convene a conference. The report of this Conference was most intricate and one could hardly make anything out of it. India's name occurred in the book in four places only. India's representative was Sir Atul Chatterjee for whom he had admiration but the occasion required the deputation of an elected representative and not of a brown sundried bureaucrat (hear hear).

Concluding Mr. Roy asked Mr. MacWatters to lay the correspondence on the table of the House in order to show that the best decision was taken of the country.

#### Government's Reply.

Mr. Mac Watters welcomed the resolution as it gave the House an opportunity of taking cognizance of a matter which was of economic and political importance to India. A full summary of the report was placed on the table. Apart from that the Government had been receiving details of the proceedings. These contained a great deal of confidential matter, figures and information given by various companies in confidence. Therefore, it was impossible so far as that record was concerned, to publish in India what was not published in any parts of the Empire. He believed that the mover asked as much information from the House as possible without disclosing the confidential matter. Two aspects of the question were emphasised. Firstly, that the commercial public should have

some assurance that they were not going to be charged excessive telegraph rates. Secondly, they would get due advantage of future improvements. The House was entitled to get information on the points.

He assured Mr. Roy that it was not the application of cable companies or magnates which caused this Conference to be called. This competition bar reduced the cable and the wireless rates very considerably in the course of the last one year or two. That was not the end of the matter. The difficulty arose in the first place from this, that private companies which owned a very important part of cable communications were to-day in a position to liquidate and pay off their shareholders at the present market rates and they would still have their cable assets to dispose of elsewhere. It was likely that these companies, if no action had been taken, would have been very reluctant to face the prospect of several years' competition in which they would inevitably in the long run have failed and, therefore, they would be tempted at once to liquidate their position.

Mr. Roy's resolution was pressed to a division and carried by fifty-three votes to thirty-six, the Government thus suffering the first defeat of the session. The number of members who remained neutral included Sir Purshottamdas, Messrs Ryder, Chatterjee, Cocke, Haye and Muhammed Yakub.

#### Pilgrims to Mecca.

Mr. Abdulla Haroon next moved the appointment of a mixed Committee of officials and non-officials with unofficial majority to enquire into the entire question of facilities for pilgrims proceeding to Hedjaz from Calcutta, Bombay and Karachi Ports, duties and powers of protectors of pilgrims and Haaj Committees and all matters pertaining to pilgrim traffic and make necessary recommendations providing better arrangements for pilgrims mitigating their hardships and inconveniences.

He said that this was a question in which both Government and people were vitally interested and hardly a day passed without a complaint about the disabilities under which the pilgrims suffered. He urged for the creation of a special department at Jeddah on behalf of the Government of India.

Sir Mohammad Habibulla suggested that the best course would have been to communicate this resolution to the Provincial Governments, asking them to express their views and on receipt of their views to place the whole correspondence on the table of the House. Then if, after consultation with the Muslim members of the Central Legislature on the question which would emerge from the correspondence, it was found that the appointment of a committee was necessary it could be done. But if the members insisted on the appointment of a Committee before addressing the Provincial Government he would not oppose and on behalf of the Government of India he would accept the verdict. The Committee, however, could only be appointed if its appointment was approved by the Standing Finance Committee and the expenditure sanctioned by the Assembly. The activity of this Committee would be confined to arrangements in India. This condition was necessary in order to avoid investigation in matters like quarantine arrangements at Kamaran which was in the Persian Gulf or arrangements in the Hedjaz which was a foreign territory.

At this stage the President advised the House to discuss the question with Sir Mohammad in private and find out if a "via media" could be found. It was no use continuing the discussion when the Government were already in sympathy with their solution. The House then adjourned.

#### The Public Safety Bill.

On the 6TH SEPTEMBER the Hon. Mr. Cramer, Home Member, moved the *Public Safety (Removal from India) Bill* providing powers for the deportation of Bolshevik agents. Pandit Motilal Nehru raised an objection that copies of the Bill had not been made available to the members three days before the date of introduction under the standing orders. The President upheld the objection and ruled that the motion could not be moved before Monday next. In doing so the President gave the following Ruling:—

"It is a very difficult question as the Law Member has already pointed out. I think all difficulties will be solved if I were to postpone the decision of this question; that would mean that consideration of this would go to the next day and no difficulty would

arise, (Swarajist cheers). But I do not propose to take up that course. I take the responsibility of giving my own ruling.

"As I understand it, there is absolutely no doubt that this motion cannot be made unless copies of the Bill have been made available to the hon. members, three days before to-day. The question is whether in this case copies of the Bill have been made available to the hon. members three days before to-day. I am clearly of opinion that the publication of the Bill in the Government Gazette cannot dispense with the obligation which is laid by the standing orders on the office to make the copies available to the hon. members. That expression has a special meaning attached to it by the standing orders and in the absence of any direction by my predecessors as to the manner in which the Bill is to be deposited and the place in which it is to be deposited, I am afraid I must hold that copies of the Bill have not been made available to the hon. members three days before to-day. I, therefore, rule that this motion cannot be made to-day unless the standing orders are suspended. As no request has been made on this behalf, it is not necessary for the chair to consider that point."

The ruling was greeted by the opposition benches with cheers and reduced to-day's sitting to a brief one.

#### Insurance Bill.

Sir George Rainy then moved that the Bill amending the Indian Life Assurance Companies Act providing inter alia for collection of statistical information in respect of insurance business other than life assurance business be referred to a Select Committee consisting of Mr. Mohammad Yakub, Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas, Sir James Simpson, Lala Lajpat Rai, Mr. H. C. Cooke, Mr. Jammadas Mehta, Mr. G. D. Birla, Mr. A. H. Ghuznavi, Mr. Nirmal Chandra Chunder, Mr. Sessa Iyengar and the mover with instructions to report before September 10. The Assembly then adjourned.

#### No Confidence In Justice Terrel.

On the 8TH SEPTEMBER the proceedings became very lively when during question time the Hon. Mr. Orerar, Home Member was heckled with supplementary questions regarding Sir Courtney Terrel's remarks in the *Searchlight* case. The remarks are as follows:—

"But it appears from what we know of the former case that it was not a case of any great magnitude and having regard to the habits of the people in the particular part of the world where giving of false evidence, however deplorable it may be, is not considered an offence which is fatal to man's reputation to say the least of it. I do not think that much importance need be placed on that fact."

Replying to Mr. Gaya Prosad Singh the Home Member stated that the Government did not propose to take steps either to have the remarks withdrawn or to remove Justice Terrel from office.

Pandit Motilal Nehru at once asked whether the Government approved or disapproved of the remarks made in the judgment. The Home Member took shelter under *Standing Order* 29 which precluded him from expressing any opinion on that.

This was followed by a volley of searching questions by Sir Hari Singh Gour, Sir Purushottamdas Thankurdas and other members but the Hon. Mr. Orerar maintained a stubborn attitude.

When Mr. Gaya Prosad Singh asked if the Government were aware that the people were fast losing confidence in Sir Courtney Terrel, Mr. Orerar asked the President if the question was in order. The Hon. Mr. Patel giving his ruling in the affirmative, the Home Member replied that the Government had seen many comments in the papers but were unable to draw any inference therefrom.

#### Child Marriage Bill.

Mr. Harbilas Sarda, the author of the Child Marriage Bill, then presented a petition from Bombay in favour of the Bill. He next moved that his Bill be recommended to a Select Committee. He pointed out that the Bill had been before the country for about two years and wanted that the Select Committee should report within three days.

Mr. Lalchand Navarai objected to the motion on the ground that he had not received the copies of the Bill till to-day where under rule 38 he should have got it at least three days ago.

Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar pointed out that Mr. Navarai's objection could have the force only in respect of a Bill whereon the Select Committee had not reported. In this view the President shared.

Lala Lajpat Rai moved that the Select Committee should report within three days and that to the Committee should be added Messrs. Birla, Yusuf Imam, Abdul Haye, Bhargava, Shilliday, Nilkanth Das and Rafique.

At this stage Sir Moropant Joshi and Rani of Mandi and a large number of supporters of the Bill were present in the gallery.

Mr. Acharya in a vehement speech lasting more than half an hour which was subjected to considerable interruptions, urged the Select Committee to examine the orthodox point carefully before submitting the report. At one stage heckling was so much that the President had to intervene pointing out that although Mr. Acharya might be in the minority, he was entitled to express his views however unpalatable they might be.

Mr. Acharya discussed the biological and psychological effects of marriages and quoted largely from scientific books in support of his view that early marriage was not bad. He stressed that the Bill itself had been considerably altered by the Select Committee. While originally it was intended to regulate child marriage, the Select Committee had altered it into one of imposing restraint upon solemnisation of child marriages. He feared that under the Bill domestic life would be torn and career of girls would be ruined on account of husbands being sentenced to imprisonment. He held that real sexual morality was impossible without child marriage (ironical cheers). He was not against some law against child marriage but was certainly dead against the measure as now before the House. He appealed to the Select Committee to remember that it was legislating not for the present age but for eternity.

The motion of Lala Rajpat Rai was carried with applause.

#### Bill to Amend Indian Divorce Act.

Sir Hari Singh Gour moved for reference to the Select Committee of his Bill amending the Indian Divorce Act. He was prepared to exclude from the operation of the Bill the domiciled Europeans if they did not want the Bill but legislation of this nature was urgent and much-needed for reform for the Anglo-Indians, Christians and others who marry under the Special Marriage Act. Reference to the Select Committee would help to focus public opinion.

Mr. Orerar replying admitted that there were anomalies in the law. But Dr. Gour's Bill would introduce an element of disturbance. Moreover the speaker did not favour legislation unless there was a reasonable volume of evidence to show that the communities affected desired an amendment of law.

There was no evidence of that. The Archdeacon of Calcutta and the Bishop of Lahore opposed the Bill. The European Association disapproved it. The Communities affected showed no desire to have the reform.

Dr. Gour thereupon asked leave to withdraw the Bill.

Col. Crawford wanted an opportunity to express the views of his community on the Bill as the proposed legislation was bound to cause a considerable confusion by enacting the law different from what is in force at home.

The President asked the member to confine himself to opposing or supporting the withdrawal motion.

Col. Crawford said he opposed the withdrawal till the minority community had an opportunity of expressing its opinion.

Mr. Chatterjee joined issue and opposed the withdrawal with a view to enable the House to defeat the bill.

Mr. Ranga Iyer suggested merely for reason to give the minority members a chance to record their views on the Bill that the withdrawal be rejected.

When the motion was put to vote Dr. Gour challenged a division but later finding no support did not press the division and the House refused Dr. Gour's motion for withdrawal amidst cheers. The President then called upon Col. Crawford to speak.

Col. Crawford said that as the General Secretary of the European Association he attempted to ascertain the views of the community but none replied thus showing the community did not want the Bill. Moreover the Bill was premature and injudicious and it was better to await the reform in England before undertaking any reform of this kind in India.

Mr. Ranga Iyer described Dr. Gour as not a social reformer but a social revolutionary and hoped that Dr. Gour would have feet to climb instead of wings to soar.

Rev. Chatterjee representing the Indian Christian Community declared that it was thrust upon the community.

Col. Gidney while agreeing that some kind of legislation was necessary preferred the Government to bring such Bills before the Assembly.

The motion for the Select Committee was defeated without division.

#### Mr. Joshi's Bill.

Mr. N. M. Joshi moved the appointment of a Select Committee of his Bill to amend the I. P. C. Mr. Joshi explained that the object of his Bill was to extend to unregistered

Trade Unions the same immunity enjoyed by the registered Unions in respect of action done by two or more persons in contemplation of the furtherance of trade disputes or in restraining of trade. He said that the opinions received showed both in favour and against the Bill. One office opposed the Bill because it proceeded from the speaker (laughter.) He asked whether money was considered untouchable because of the source it proceeded from.

A Voice—What about Russian money?

Mr. Joshi :—Russian money is not considered untouchable by the European nations but they cannot have it.

Mr. Joshi hoped the House would not be influenced by a prejudiced view against his Bill which was very necessary at this stage of development of the Trade Union movement. Mr. Joshi feared that capitalist influence over the Government was great and the Government itself being the largest employer of labour was siding with the capitalists.

Sir Victor Sassoon, a representative of the Bombay millowners, opposed the bill, root and branch. The Bill was simple and did not require clouds of words used by Mr. Joshi and legal researches. The simple issue was, should the House encourage rival competition between registered and unregistered Trade Unions? He was surprised why Mr. Joshi should encourage this especially as Mr. Joshi was the President of the registered textile Trade Union which was run on sound lines. It was a poor compliment to Labour leaders to say that labourers were ignorant and did not realise the advantage of registered Trade Unions.

Mr. Thakurdas Bhargava supported the principle of the Bill because when an action could not lie against persons for certain acts done singly why should it lie when done by more than one. He quoted the Punjab High Court's opinion in his support.

The Hon. Mr. McWatters, opposing Mr. Joshi's motion, pointed out that it was opposed by all Provincial Governments, also the High Courts. And no less than twenty-three out of twenty-eight commercial bodies in Bombay, including the Indian Merchants' Chamber. The Government were satisfied that the Bill struck at the very root of the Trade Union legislation passed only two years ago, the object of which was to encourage the growth of responsible Trade Unions in India. Under Mr. Joshi's Bill there would be less incentive for the registration of Trade Unions.

Mr. Joshi replying said that he was not surprised that two distinguished members of two powerful Trade Unions opposed the Bill on the ground that it was not useful. Mr. McWatters, representing the I.C.S. Trade Union and Sir Victor Sassoon representing the Bombay Millowners' Association.

The motion for the Select Committee was supported by the Swarajists, a large number of Nationalists but was lost by forty-nine votes against fifty-seven.

#### Divorce for Hindu Wives.

Sir Hari Singh Gour moved for a Select Committee on the Bill entitling a Hindu Wife to obtain declaration of invalidity of her marriage or its dissolution on the grounds of impotency or imbecility of her husband or on the ground that he was suffering from sanious or ulcerous leprosy. He said the Hindu Law was in chaos and confusion and he merely attempted to restore to Law the practice of dissolution of marriage which had become non-existent. He quoted Narad and Vasishta and argued that the nation's life had been emasculated and must be restored to virility. He urged the house not to stick to orthodox bigotry.

Lala Lajpat Rai opposed the motion and described the Bill as reactionary in law. Hindu Marriage was three thousand years old and was now existant. Why then was a change demanded and where was any instance to show that the courts had held that they had no jurisdiction in cases arising out of such a matter. He feared Dr. Gour was going too fast for the Assembly without knowing what repercussions this Bill would have in other aspects of the Hindu law. For example, Dr. Gour's Hindu Succession Bill had already introduced complications that there were many who were contemplating its repeal.

Dr. Gour made a long speech which he concluded with a request to withdraw the Bill. At the same time he pointed out that the customs had made the dissolution of marriages impossible. The Bill was withdrawn. The House then adjourned.

#### The Public Safety Bill.

On the 10TH SEPTEMBER as soon as Mr. Crerar rose to move consideration of the Public Safety Bill Pandit Motilal Nehru raised an interesting point of order that the Legislature had no power to enact a law which affected the allegiance of British subjects to the Crown by depriving him of rights granted to him by various Charters and

that Parliament had definitely excluded under Section 65, of the Government of India Act the Assembly undertaking that question.

An interesting debate followed, the Law Member, Hon'ble Mr. S. R. Das, saying that it was not open to Panditji or to the House or to the Chair to raise the question of *ultra vires* in regard to any legislation before the House. The Home Member said that the Government had been taken by surprise and wanted an adjournment till 3 P.M.

The President said that the point of order raised a constitutional issue of great importance. As, however, Section 65 Sub-clause 2 did not prevent the House from considering the legislation but only prevented its passing, he allowed the Home Member to make the motion saying that he would give his ruling after full consideration.

Mr. CRERAR rose amidst cheers to move the consideration of the Public Safety Bill. He said that every organised Government of whatever kind must assume to itself the power to retain for its own safety and for carrying out its functions. No responsible person would controvert that such powers were necessary. (Hear hear). Power was necessary for the preservation of all those conditions which were the fundamental basis of all form of ordinary society. He contended that there were dangers threatening not only the existence of the Government and conditions of peace and order but threaten the most vital interests and most vital organs of the whole state of society. There was a movement which, if left unchecked, would ultimately prove destructive, so that the whole heritage of culture, civilisation, religion, organisation of agriculture, industry and commerce and the whole structure of society might be destroyed. There were interests more vital to the people of the country than the most vital of economic interests and when those were threatened by revolutionary parties, it was time for the Government to step in and effectively check the movement.

There was nothing more destructive of an ordered society than the doctrine and practice of Communism. This doctrine was in India not merely in theory but in practice. Some might argue that the spread of the doctrine of Communism must be tolerated but even the practice of toleration had its limitations when that doctrine encroached on the liberties and threatened peace and lives and properties of the people. Subversive and reprehensible doctrines were being hatched and propagated in India and the movement must be checked. There was evidence that the doctrine of Communism was spreading. Mr. Crerar quoted extracts from the judgment of the Allahabad High Court in a revolutionary case in which it was stated that the accused wanted to take advantage of Chauri Chaurah and Moplah rebellion and the Rae Bareilly incidents to push through Communist programme.

Secondly, there was evidence of Communist intentions in the draft programme of the Communist International, which, he understood, was recently approved in principle by it. This programme included destructions of capitalists, replacing of the Soviet Army, concentration of arms in the hands of the proletariat, expropriation of landlords, nationalisation of large enterprises, confiscation of church lands and promotion of general strikers.

Proceeding the Home Member said he would now quote from a letter of Mr. M. N. Roy. Mr. Ranga Iyer promptly asked if the Government was aware that Mr. Roy's letter had been denied as fabricated.

Mr. Crerar: I saw this in recent Reuter's Telegrams. But I cannot say if that statement is correct. I know that the British communist party addressed a reproach to Mr. M. N. Roy on the assumption that he had given ground to the Government to take action on a matter of this kind. The answer was that the letter was not written by Mr. M. N. Roy. There may be some measure of literal inaccuracy but it is true that the letter was written.

Proceeding, Mr. Crerar produced a typewritten letter addressed in the outer cover to be delivered to Mr. Muzaffar Ahmed, 21 European Asylum Lane, Calcutta, with the words, "to be delivered personally" expunged and bearing postmark '16th May.' The letter was intended for circulation to various committees and the Workers' and Peasants' Parties in India. The first few words of the letter wanted the addressee to give special acknowledgment.

Mr. Ranga Iyer interrupting asked if the letter was signed by Mr. Roy.

Mr. Crerar replied that it bore corrections and additions in handwriting of one which resembled the manuscript letters of Mr. M. N. Roy in the Government possession. Mr. Crerar quoted freely from Mr. Roy's letter (recently published) and said that the interests of India and Great Britain were identical in this matter. Tracing the history of Communist activities Mr. Crerar alluded to the Cownpore conspiracy case of 1924 in which four accused including Mr. Muzaffar Ahmad were convicted and sentenced. Then there was slackening of their activities. But there was recrudescence in 1926 with the arrival of certain British Communists, first, in the person of Allison who was removed

from India, then two others who continued activities during the last one year and half. Even the British Trade Union Congress decided recently to purge the organisation of communists.

Mr. Crerar reminded the Assembly that the sufferings and privations of labourers in India were owing to Communists' activities.

Continuing Mr. Crerar said that no Indian subject could possibly come within the provisions of this Bill. Circumstances were such that discretionary power must be given to the Government on whom the responsibility lay for dealing with extremely difficult and delicate situation created by the activities of those out to subvert Indian society as now constituted. If danger were in the form of direct action be trusted the arms of the Government would be supported by the unanimous authority of this House and if the danger was indirect and subterranean but having the same objective in view then, too, the Government should have support.

Finally, Mr. Crerar argued the case for urgency and said that he did not know whether the existing grave dangers or their even graver potentialities be challenged. Such a challenge could only proceed from determination to ignore the plain and incontestable facts. The Communist propaganda which had been avowed and reiterated by its agents and instruments in most unequivocal terms must proceed from failure to appreciate their significance. But some might declare that there was no urgent necessity to deal with these activities. The Government view was that they could not accept the responsibility for allowing the present state of affairs to continue unchecked even for a few months or a few weeks. The Government felt that they must be armed with these powers with the least possible delay and that it would be an inexcusable folly and dereliction of duty on their part to wait until mischief has been wrought.

The fundamental question he put was whether the avowed objects and expedients of the Communist doctrine and activities were to be taken seriously or not. He did not believe any observer even from outside and regarding only the surface of things, would readily believe that the course of events specially in the industrial world during the last few months represented merely normal incidents and vicissitudes of industrial depression or trade disputes. Some of these troubles were no doubt economic in their origin but prolongation of strikes long after any party had anything to gain by their continuance was not normal. Train disasters accompanied by shocking fatalities and other violent sabotage were not normal incidents but they were entirely in accordance with the tenets of communist doctrines.

Mr. Crerar in concluding the appeal to share with the Government the responsibility for the measure said: "I have convincing evidence that sinister and external influence has been and is at work. It is not within my power to expose in public utterance the ramifications of its working for obvious reason. That to do so would be to give invaluable information to the enemy and weaken and impede or even defeat our own defensive measures. I must ask the House to credit me when I say, speaking with a very heavy sense of my own responsibility in this matter, that we have not to deal with mere visionary and fantastic theories realisation of which postulates complete destruction of the existing social order but with a persistent and definite design to take the first and then ultimate steps to put them into operation. I do not think the responsibility of taking necessary measures to deal with such attempt should be left to the Government alone. It is the responsibility which every citizen should be prepared so far in him lies to share. It is a responsibility of which I now ask this House to take its part.

Mr. Amar Nath DUTT moved that the Bill be circulated for eliciting opinions thereon. In moving his motion Mr. Dutt said that the Bill was a most comprehensive measure and should not be rushed through in the manner suggested. Many of the offences were already covered by the Indian Penal Code and he did not wish to be armed with another strong weapon. No case had been made out for enacting the Bill. He had conversation with one of the biggest industrialists in India and he informed the speaker that the Bill would not in any way protect the industries or labourer as it was suggested by the Home Member. He had been in public life for more than a quarter of a century. But he had not come across a single Communist or Communist literature. He challenged the genuineness of Mr. M. N. Roy's letter and characterised it to be a simple fabrication. No Indian wished revolution or subversion of the present society and if it was proved to the speaker that there was danger of such things occurring he would whole-heartedly support the Bill. Mr. Dutt alluded to the deplorable lot of workmen and peasants, most of whom did not get full meal per day. He did not know what exactly the doctrines of the Communists were but they could not be anything else except that every person must be adequately fed and clothed. India was open for all foreigners and must remain open for them so long as their sojourn here was not injurious to India.

Sir Hari Singh Gour moved reference of the Bill to a Select Committee consisting of Mr. Fazal Ibrahim Rahimtullah, Sir David Sassoon, Sir Zulfikar Ali Khan, Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar, the Home Member and the mover.

Some fun was caused by a member moving the names of Lala Lajpat Rai and Mr. K. C. Roy as members of the committee, but both members declared that they had not consented to serve on the Committee.

Dr. Gour said that when he first saw the Bill he was inclined to oppose it wholesale, but later considerations made him modify his views. He quoted from a book describing the Communists' doctrines that they intended to overthrow family life, destroy social order and paralyse industry.

Dr. Gour said that Indian industrialism was only thirty years old and could not stand losses from strikes as the British capitalists could. Railway strikes and derailment of trains were signs of the times. He saw lawlessness setting in, due to set purpose supported by outside Communism, and must support some measure, though he desired to provide safeguards, and not arm the Government with unlimited powers. The Select Committee could do this by limiting the life of the Bill and also by so substantially altering it as to make it innocuous. There was no doubt, however, in his mind that the Communist menace was there and must be controlled.

At this stage the President declared that the debate would be carried on the 12th and adjourned the House.

#### Enquiry into Haj Grievances.

On the 11TH SEPTEMBER the House discussed non-official resolutions and the first was Haji Abdoolla Haroon's resolution urging Haj enquiry.

Mr. Fazal Rahimtullah announced that an agreement had been reached between the Government and the Muslim Members on the subject for which he was thankful to Sir Mohd. Habibullah and Mr. Bajpai and he accordingly moved an amendment to omit the provision that the enquiry by a Committee be open throughout as they recognized at some stages the Government might wish to hold in camera sittings.

Mr. Bajpai made it clear that firstly the personnel and the terms of reference of the proposed Committee be at the discretion of the Government; secondly, the funds must first be voted by the Legislature though he did not anticipate any difficulty on the point and thirdly the scope of the survey would not be rigidly confined to India but it would be open for the Committee to inquire into the conditions in Hedjaz subject to diplomatic requirements and international propriety.

Accordingly the following amended resolution was passed by the House unanimously:—

"That a mixed Committee of officials and non-official Muslims with a clear non-official majority be appointed to hold an enquiry to take evidence with a view to investigate the entire question of facilities for pilgrims proceeding to Hedjaz from Calcutta, Bombay, and Karachi Ports the duties the powers of protectors of pilgrims and the Haj Committees and all matters pertaining to pilgrim traffic and to make necessary recommendations for providing better arrangement for pilgrims and mitigating their hardships and inconveniences."

#### High Court Judges.

Mr. A. H. Ghuznavi moved a resolution recommending to the Government to take steps for improving the scale of salary of all High Court Judges. The present salary of judges was fixed in 1899 and although a considerable rise in prices occurred no increment was given to the judges. The Ministers were getting Rs. 64,000 annually while the High Court judges were getting Rs. 48,000 only.

The speaker said that since 1899 the supertax had been introduced with the result that the judge's salaries had further decreased although there had been an increase in all services. It was consequently becoming increasingly difficult for the High Court Judges to live in the manner consistent with the high position they held.

The resolution was put to vote and defeated by 22 votes to 47, the Government remaining neutral.

#### College for Girls.

Sardar Jowahir Singh's resolution was moved with the Chair's permission by Mr. Chatterjee who moved the Government to sanction a substantial grant of capital and recurring for the furtherance of girls' education in the centrally administered territories and that as the first step towards this a well staffed and up-to-date college be established for training women teachers and that a Committee including women be appointed to report on the subject.

Mr. Mukhtar Singh moved an amendment urging compulsory primary education



for girls between 6 and 11 years and the establishment of a women's training school for the purpose.

The House adjourned till the next day. The debate was consequently postponed to the next non-official resolution day.

### The Public Safety Bill.

On the 12TH SEPTEMBER the House resumed considerations of the Public Safety Bill. Sir Victor Sassoon was cheered as he rose on behalf of the European group to support the principle of the Bill.

Sir Victor Sassoon held that the proposed legislation was not out of ordinary. In England it was true that the power to expel was limited to aliens but in America where according to Mr. Ranga Iyer liberty ran riot, provisions went further than what was proposed for India and the South African Law was similar to that of America.

Pundit Motilal had tried nobly to stand as a champion for the Britishers in India. The Europeans would not forget this chivalrous action nor would they fail to call on him for help when they would consider the position of Englishmen in India was affected. But in this case the European group held that the European Communist needed no consideration because he had no national ideals and had developed internationalism of Russian brand.

Sir Victor hoped that Mr. Joshi would change his views but his amendments to the Bill showed that he was opposed to the measure. The Communists' aim was not only to liquidate the capitalists and religious leaders but the Trade Unionists of the type of Mr. Joshi are to be sooner or later efficaciously and possibly painfully eliminated. The intelligentsia was to share the same fate. Indeed, the avowed aim of the Communists was to bring about suffering of all cultured classes. This Bill, therefore, was in the nature of a measure discriminating protection to safeguard the indigenous agitators against the foreign competitors but here was Mr. Joshi in spite of his experience in Bombay declining to be protected. Sir Victor warned that if the 'Red' contingent were not expelled now, it was bound to train the Indian leaders as propagandists who would work internally to disrupt the society.

The speaker asked why was a section in the House desirous of committing literal suicide. Firstly, the convention had shown than no Government measure could possibly be a good one, or if apparently beneficial, had some hidden machiavellian intent, secondly, there was complete lack of belief that a country like India with millions of small landholders imbued with deepest religious convictions could prove a suitable soil for Communism. As for the latter view he narrated his experience of China where, too, he thought for similar reasons Bolshevism could never flourish. He was visiting China regularly for business interests. When two years ago he met in Canton some members of the Nationalist Government he too was given a lunch by men held in high political repute in China. But unlike Mr. Ranga Iyer who lunched with Mr. Lloyd George the speaker was only offered a glass of lemonade. The Chinese Nationalists told him that they had been refused help by all other Powers except Soviet Russia who had supplied them ammunitions and advisers for both military and civil, opened military schools for them, taught them administration and that the Chinese people would never absorb foreign doctrines. This was two years ago. The speaker again went to China after the last Delhi Session and met some friends not in Canton but in Hankow and Shanghai where the Nationalist Government was established after unprecedented military success. This time they had a different tale to tell. They told how after their successful march to the Yangtse river the Russians wanted to call the tune. The Nationalist Government discovered that the body corporate of the Chinese people was riddled with Communist plague spots. As Mr. Ranga Iyer had said with more truth than he imagined that this was a case of a lunatic. You could not argue with the Communists just as you could not argue with a mad dog outside. So the Chinese Nationalist Government decided to eliminate them by executing them, their countrymen, in thousands not only in towns but in villages and a general had returned that day to Hankow after carrying out these executions. This had only been scotched in China but not dead. It was allowed too long to start and the propaganda schools had done mischief to-day. Japan too was affected.

Mr. M. N. Roy's letter was probably drawn from the Propaganda Department and changed here and there and Roy would not hesitate to call it a forgery if it served his purpose, because Lenin's strategy included lying and betrayal as a legitimate weapon. One of their pamphlets detailed how to deal with the labour leaders of the Joshi type. They were to be used but when the right moment came the communists were to turn on these Labour leaders calling them running dogs of bourgeois and imperialists,

Sir Victor emphasised that they were dealing with the most dangerous national enemy. Some clauses of the Bill were too wide. This could be put right in the Select Committee but he asked the House not to delay the measure by circulation. This was a case of his trying to preach capitalism in Russia and being told by the Soviet to exercise his talents elsewhere. Why should India show quarters to the Communists?

Lala LAJPAT RAI opposing the consideration of the motion agreed with Mr. Ranga Iyer that the Bill of this type would be thrown out of the Parliament of any civilised country in the world. It was wrong to say that in America under the Immigration Laws, a person could be summarily sent away from the country. He knew it for a fact that in America a person was given notice to show cause why he should not be asked to leave the country and was allowed to protect himself by lawyer. Furthermore orders of the Immigration Authorities could be questioned in a Supreme Court.

Law of the kind proposed did not exist now anywhere except in Fascist Italy. If that was the model of the Government which the British Government wished to follow in India, then he had nothing to say. He did not dispute the honesty of the individual Government members but he charged the Government of India with dishonesty of purpose in sanctioning the introduction of this measure. The Government had failed to show that there was absolutely nothing new in M. N. Roy's letter. The Government were guilty in publishing the letter eight months after its alleged receipt in India, merely for the sake of creating an atmosphere for this legislation. This Bill would not stop the issue in future of pamphlets like the one alleged to have been received from Roy.

So far as he knew there were only two persons suspected to be Communist agents. One of them had been in jail ever since he arrived in India and the other was one, Mr. Spratt. The speaker did not know who Spratt was but it was absurd to suppose that one man could be instrumental in bringing about all these strikes and disturbances. Thus this was the only material placed before the House to justify such a drastic legislation. On principle no penal law should be enacted except when there was absolute necessity for doing so. Regulation 111 of 1818 and even the Indian Penal Code were quite sufficient to deal with any kind of guilt but the Government were bent upon burdening further the Indian tax-payer. This measure was designed to be not only against the foreigners but eventually it would be used against the Nationalists and those persons who advocated the cause of labourers. Thus under this law the Government could one day say that as Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru advocated Independent Government they were Bolsheviks and, therefore, could easily be deported. This is clear from the Clause 11 which says: "Person who directly or indirectly advocates overthrow by force or violence of the Government established by law in British India etc."

Continuing Lala Lajpat Rai said that the Communists did not attack all religions but merely attacked the conventional Christian religion. Therefore there was no need to protect the Hindu culture.

Concluding Lala Lajpat Rai declared that they had painful experience of how men had been deprived of liberty in the past not because of revolutionary activities but because of administrative convenience. He particularly opposed arming the Government of India as now constituted with special powers. The Government's whole outlook was narrow imperialism. If any one was to be expelled from India it was the foreign capitalist (laughter) who wanted his money to be protected. "Let these capitalists go away. We will give them free passage. (laughter). But they want their money to be saved and not the Indian peasant. Why were Lancashire and the British Trade Unions sending money to support the strike because these wanted the British industries to suffer at India's expense. I oppose the Bill because unless it is entirely changed by a Select Committee it will serve no useful purpose (loud applause).

Mr. Srinivasa IYENGAR could not congratulate the Home Member on the presentation of his case. No proof had been furnished that the British Government was going to be destroyed or the Indian society subverted. Mr. Crerar would laugh at them if they took him seriously. (Laughter). What was the guarantee that the Governor-General-in-Council would not go wrong? How many files did Mr. Crerar sign without asserting his own independence. (Laughter)? It was the will of a police officer, a district officer or a commercial magnate strong enough to press his view which the Governor-General-in-Council accepted without enquiry. Again, even the fairest judge, he himself being one, (laughter), would go wrong without hearing the other side of the case.

He opposed the Bill because, firstly, it was highly repressive and, secondly, it proceeded upon racial discrimination. The Indians might be excluded from this Bill,

but full repressive laws existed for dealing with them. He characterised the Bill as a "vicious Bill".

Continuing, Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar gave personal experience of Russia which had now settled down, having arrived at a compromise between capitalism and the extreme doctrine of Communism. He found the church full of worshippers and found the fullest religious freedom. (Voices: Oh oh). The Muhamedans received instructions from the Maulvies. (Applause). They must judge Communism in action, God was not a capitalist. (Laughter). There was a practical system at work in Russia.

Col. Crawford: How long have you been in Russia?

Mr. Iyengar: Longer than you have been and I know more about them than you know about India. (Laughter and applause)

Mr. Iyengar continued that the Russians did not want a war. They had granted full autonomy to the provinces and, rather than destroy culture, had ordered the distribution of the provinces on a linguistic basis in order to preserve indigenous culture. Thus the cry that religion was in danger had no basis. Violence must of course be condemned. For that ample safeguards existed in the present law and what evidence had been produced that the Communists were practising violence in India? (Voices: Plenty).

Mr. Iyengar said that he had not seen any. Personally he stood for freedom of expression, propaganda and association and felt no danger to the body politic by allowing theorists to come. He thought that somewhere between the uncontrolled capitalism and the doctrine of Communism lay the solution. He believed in the survival of the fittest. The Bill was designed to promote an unfriendly relation between India and the foreign Governments, though India desired to remain on friendly terms with all nations. The moment the Bill was passed all danger to zamindars and the millennium would come. It was preposterous. If the Government wanted to shut out the British Communists, let the British Government prevent their coming out to India.

Sir P. THAKURDAS refused to be a party under any threat to the dangerous legislation by which persons should be deported without trial unless the Government took the Assembly into the completest confidence by placing all the information in their possession. He affirmed that the Government had already powers under Regulation III of 1818 to deal with Communism. Why, then, did they want more powers? As long as the Government retained that Regulation he would not agree to legislation of such a sweeping character, especially bearing in mind the constitution of the Government of India which was irresponsible to the Legislature. What guarantee was there that if the Bill was passed now the Government would not come to the Delhi session and ask it to be extended to Indians? His constituency was out to keep Communism out of India, but what steps had the Government taken to keep Communism down? It was the Government of India who by a shortsighted policy had prepared the soil for Communism and fertilised it by refusing military training to Indians, by currency and financial policy, increased trade depression and increased poverty of the cultivation. And now for that the Government to ask the Assembly to be a party to the Legislation of such a character was to ask too much. Who knew if at the time of the Bardoli agitation the Government had been armed with powers herein mentioned they would not have used it against Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel?

Mr. N. M. JOSHI, representative of Labour, said that it was true that the present industrial unrest prompted the Government to undertake legislation. He was not a Communist, but a participater in the Labour movement. Never could he believe that India would ever advocate force or violence. As one interested in the Labour movement he did not hate any class, but hated the system. The Bill was designed to penalise the preaching of certain doctrines which were helping the labouring classes. He knew instances when the authorities declined to negotiate with the Labour leaders in India, but waited for an Englishman like Mr. Bradley to turn up and speak on their behalf. And the Bill was designed against such an Englishman. He disagreed with Mr. Moore that the trouble at Jamshedpur had been fomented by the Communists. The trouble on the South Indian Railway was due to the policy of retrenchment. The policy which he and his friends were following was that the Labour movement was a right one and that they had nothing to fear from the Communists.

Mr. MCWATTERS intervened to remove the misconceptions created by Mr. Joshi that the Government were hostile to Labour. He asked whether by copying the British Law on trade disputes the Government were antagonistic to the claims of Labour to form a legitimate combination with a view to getting better terms. The Government undoubtedly wished to safeguard the public and the Labour against the dangers of a general strike. The Bill was a preventive measure. Did Mr. Joshi imagine that the requirements of the case would be met by a preventive measure only? The speaker agreed that the fruitful soil for Communism was economic discontent. The Government were anxious to follow a constructive policy to improve the economic conditions of Labour. The Government's record of legislation for the last five or six years showed a great volume of legislation to the benefit of Labour. More proposals were under consideration, but whatever they did in the matter of constructive policy the question of preventive action was entirely independent. Constructive policy itself might be endangered without the removal of the danger of the Communist activity. The danger was that the agents coming out to India received far greater importance than they deserved. Mr. Joshi, he was sure, would in sober moments (laughter) agree that the Bill would help him and his colleagues the Labour leaders. The House consisting of experienced and intelligent men was expected to take a wider view.

The debate had not concluded when the President adjourned it till Friday the 14th as the next day was a non-official day.

### The Coastal Traffic Bill.

On the 13TH SEPTEMBER Mr. Haji moved that the Bill for Coastal Reservation be referred to a Select Committee consisting of Pandit Motilal Nehru, Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, Mr. Shanmukham Chetty, Mr. Satyender Chandra Mitra, Maulvi Muhamed Shafee Daudi, Mr. U. Tok Kyi, Lala Lajpat Rai, Pandit Malaviya, Mr. Birla, Mr. K. C. Neogy, Mr. Aney, Sir Purushottam Das Thakurdas, Mr. Abdul Matin Choudhuri, Sir Zulfiqar Ali Khan, Sir Abdul Quayam, Sir George Rainey and the mover with instructions to report before the 10th February, 1929.

In course of his speech Mr. Haji was frequently interrupted by members of the European group, Sir Victor Sassoon taking a prominent part. To the interruption by Sir Victor, who asked what about the goodwill of the British Shipping Companies in coastal trade which would be affected by the Bill, Mr. Haji said that it ill behoved the British Shipping to talk of goodwill.

Sir Victor:—What about the business aspect of the term goodwill.

Mr. Haji:—But there is certainly something like morality in business. (Non-official cheers).

Continuing Mr. Haji cited the opinion submitted by the Bombay Millowners' Association in support of the principle underlying the Bill and challenged Sir Victor to vote against the Bill. Other members of the European group had in their favour the opinion of the European Commercial bodies. But the constituency which Sir Victor directly represented in this House had given its support to the principle of the Bill and Sir Victor would betray his constituency if he voted against the Bill (non-official cheers).

Continuing Mr. Haji said:—I see no distinction between the principle underlying the Bill and the principle embodied in the Bill. If Sir Victor will be true to his constituency he should vote for reference of the Bill to a Select Committee. The motion before the House commits the House to principle only and not to details. The Select Committee is the best body to examine the provisions of the Bill.

Sir James SIMPSON, representative of the Associated Chambers of Commerce in the Assembly, followed Mr. Haji opposing the motion for a Select Committee.

Sir James said: "I oppose the Bill not because I am opposed to India's interests but because I am convinced that the Bill is opposed to the true interests of India (cries of Oh! Oh! and ironical cheers from non-official benches). I congratulate the Hon'ble Member on his sincere and out-spoken speech and

also on the clever propaganda which he has so skilfully conducted in the country in support of his Bill. By his persistent propaganda Mr. Haji has raised in the country the slogan of Indian versus British interests. I do not share that view. To my mind both Indian and British rights are inter-dependent and indivisible (cries of question).

A voice : Indian share is nothing.

It is due to a century of Indo-British co-operation that India occupies an honoured place in the principal countries of the world. Any measure which is calculated to strike at the root of that co-operation and strike at the glory which that cooperation has built up for India should be strongly deprecated. To-day the Bill cast greedy eyes on shipping. To-morrow eyes would be cast on coal, oil, tea and coffee.

A voice : Why not ?

Sir James :—Where will it stop ?

A voice : Why should it stop ?

Sir James next cited the memorandum of the Associated Chambers to the Simon Commission to show that the Associated Chambers stood for the progress of India although they were apprehensive of safeguarding the legitimate British interests under the present and future Indian constitution. It is for that reason that the Associated Chambers proposed certain safeguards to be included in the constitution."

Sir James next read from the report of the Nehru Committee that the British Community need not be apprehensive of their legitimate interests and appealed to Pandit Motilal Nehru as the author of the report to redeem the promise contained in the report. The vote of the leader of the opposition on the Bill would be a test of the genuineness of the assurance extended to the British community in the Nehru Report.

Continuing Sir James said : "I oppose the Bill on two grounds. One is that it discriminates racially and politically against men like me who are British Indian Nationals and who are settled in the country and who are entitled to franchise and also on the ground that it is a bad Bill. I claim as a British Indian National no special privileges but equal rights with the sons of the soil. I claim nothing more and will accept nothing less.

Sir James next cited the opinion of the Government of Burma in opposition to the Bill on the ground that it would increase the burden on the consumer. Sir James also quoted Sir Sivaswami Iyer who expressed the view that Sir Charles Innes' arguments against the Bill must be squarely met and contended that they had not been so met. Sir James also quoted the opinion of the Council of the International Chamber some years ago against coastal reservation.

Mr. Shanmukham Chetty :—Will the Hon'ble Member cite the case of any country which has developed its mercantile marine after establishing its navy ?

There was however, no reply.

Continuing Sir James said that the mover of the Bill had not counted the cost to the country of placing the Bill on the Statute Book. In his opinion the Bill was protection run mad. He estimated that it would require one hundred Indian vessels to meet the entire requirements of Indian coastal trade. It would involve a capital outlay of Rs. 12 crores. He wondered whether that much capital would be forthcoming. Analysing the expenses of the Shipping Companies Sir James also maintained that the destination of important items going to make the expenditure of a Shipping Company would remain the same whether vessels were owned by the British Companies or the Indian Companies. The only payment which would be diverted to Indian channels would be the payment of dividends. In the absence of Indian ship-building yards (A voice : whose is the responsibility ?) and in the absence of Indian personnel for superior posts the destination of payments would remain unaltered for a long time even if vessels were owned by Indian Companies.

Sir James then had a fling at Mr. Haji and said that Mr. Haji was only a paid servant of the Scindia Steam Navigation Company which would benefit mostly by the Bill. It would have been preferable that the Bill should have been sponsored by a less disinterested person.

Sir James also said that "Scindia" was a member of the Conference of Shipping Companies participating in coastal trade and it was not for Mr. Haji, a paid servant of the Company, to decry the existing monopoly. It was an ill bird that fouled its own nest.

Mr. K. C. NEOGY following spiritedly replied to the flings of Sir James Simpson directed personally against the mover of the Bill. Mr. Neogy said that he looked to the Indian Year Book to find who this Simpson was. There was one Simpson C. I. E. who got a Police medal. The previous speaker did not answer to that description. He next consulted the Thackers' Directory but there were forty-five Simpsons.

The President :—Order, Order. What has that got to do with the Bill?

Mr. Neogy :—I am referring to them because personal factors have been brought into the argument in this House. I find there is one Sir James Simpson serving in certain European firms who are agents of four or five Shipping Companies. To my mind this paid servant is the particular gentleman in the House. He represents the European Chambers in which is represented that British Shipping Company, the Inchcape gang.

Continuing the speaker said that he himself had brought the Bill in the House two years ago and it was also ballotted but in order to oblige the Government he did not pursue the measure because the Government wanted to know where they stood. This time he allowed Mr. Haji to move it because he knew of it better than the speaker. They were in the House in a representative capacity and what they were in private life, had got nothing to do with the question they had to deal with in the House (hear, hear). Continuing the speaker said that he had been in the House for more than seven years but he never heard such a disgraceful speech as that which was delivered with reference to Mr. Haji. "Play the game said Sir Simpson" went on Mr. Neogy. "What game? British game? Let us see what the spiritual fathers of Sir James Simpson did in the past in reference to the question."

The speaker then read extracts from the reports of the Directors of the East India Company in which they declared their uncompromising opposition to the employment of Indian ships for carrying goods to England. "This is the British game, this is the game to which the Hon'ble gentleman refers" (cheers).

Pandit Motilal NEHRU next supported Mr. Haji's motion for reference of the Bill to a Select Committee. He said :—

The Hon'ble Member for the Associated Chambers has paid me a compliment of quoting from the Constitution Report and inviting me to go into the lobby with him. I am prepared to make him a sporting offer. I am prepared to consider his invitation if the Hon'ble Member's constituency is prepared to accept here and to-day the report of the Constitution Committee and accept Dominion Status (cheers).

The Hon'ble Member, Sir, spoke of the glory of India. It would be more appropriate to call it the glory of Anglo-India. I use it in a large sense of the term. I saw what this glory means when I went to Gauhati up the river Hooghly. I came across palatial residences of jute kings on the one hand and only a few miles further across of the misery of the Indians who work for them. They were ill-clothed and ill-protected from wind and rain.

Sir James talked of British rights in coastal trade. How was that right acquired? No reply had been given to the long indictment of Mr. Haji as to how Indian Shipping had been ruthlessly strangled. Sir James talked of British rights in coal, jute, coffee, tea and oil industries. That was a tragedy of the situation that in all these industries the non-Indians dominated. Sir James also talked about equal rights and equal opportunities. I would ask the Member, 'Had we any opportunities'?

Sir James Simpson : Yes.

Pandit Motilal : No. What about the hundred and more tales which we can tell of the ruthless repression of industries and commerce of India? These taunts of discrimination have no application under the present constitution under which there is any amount of discriminatory legislation. Have members

of the European group ever stood by the Indian Nationals when laws were passed forging fetters on the Indians or when attempts were made by sections of this House to have those laws removed from the Statute Book? On every possible occasion the Indians have been discriminated against in all conceivable walk of life without a word of protest from the European group. The most effective argument to Sir James was furnished by Sir Victor Sassoon when he said in course of interruption to Mr. Haji: "I am not an Indian."

Sir Victor explained that what he meant was that Mr. Haji's Bill did not encourage foreign capitalists to invest money in Indian industries.

Continuing Pandit Motilal said that Sir James had claimed national rights. National rights went with citizenship. If and when the British subjects now exploiting India attained full rights of British Indian citizenship under Dominion Status then they would be able to claim national rights. And what were national rights? They did not exclude creation of a National Mercantile Marine. Mercantile Marine was a second line of naval defence. It was, therefore, essential that a merchant fleet of the country must be entirely national. He was reminded of Col. Crawford's taunt that the Indians were not capable of national defence, when the Indians had been disarmed and emasculated under the Government action. Similarly, after the Indian shipping had been throttled by all means they talked of competition and open fight. Indian opinion only wanted that after Indian shipping had been ruthlessly suppressed it should be put on its feet so that it might also be able to function.

Continuing Pandit Motilal said that he did not consider the Bill to be racially discriminatory. No single section of the community had a right to say that they wanted perpetuation of sectional monopoly to the detriment of the entire national interests. The Legislature must legislate for the greatest good of the greatest numbers. If in making legislation in national interests one section of the community suffered it was inevitable and unavoidable.

His reply to Sir James Simpson was that he was prepared to go into a Select Committee on the Bill to consider what changes must be made into the Bill in the best interests of the country.

Sir George RAINY then opposed the motion on behalf of the Government. The debate had not concluded when the House adjourned.

#### INSINATIONS AGAINST THE PRESIDENT.

On the 14TH SEPTEMBER, the House re-assembling, Pandit Motilal Nehru drew the attention of the President to a campaign of vilification that was carried on against the Chair by the correspondents of "Daily Telegraph" (London) and the "Times of India."

In course of his speech Pandit Motilal referred to the startling disclosures made by the Simla Correspondent of the "Pioneer" who suggested that the Government were engaged in maintaining a propaganda against the President of the Assembly. The "Pioneer" also stated that there was "definite evidence that implicated the Home Department in this matter." The Pandit then read extracts from the "Pioneer" in which it was said that the official members "openly charged" the President with partiality in lobby conversations.

The Home Member, however, made a statement which was regarded as very disappointing. He was responsible, he said, for the conduct of the officials on the floor of the House but he had no responsibility for the action of the members outside the House.

Undoubtedly some speakers shed crocodile tears and others spoke with mental reservation. But the Hon. Mr. Crerar's attitude showed that there was something in the atmosphere itself which was vitiating the outlook even of the correspondents. Unless this was removed there was little hope of the Assembly carrying on without friction.

The Hon Mr. PATEL, the President, intervened to clear the position and said that there were four points at issue. Firstly, the conduct of the "Time of India," secondly, the conduct of the Simla Correspondent of "Daily Telegraph," London; thirdly, the Government in the "Pioneer's" words were engaged in a nauseating propaganda to discredit the Chair; fourthly, the Government officers were busily

engaged in this propaganda. The matter was brought to his notice yesterday by the leader of the House who showed Mr. Patel a copy of the "Pioneer."

The President said that Pandit Motilal referred to a certain incident regarding the supply of books to Pandit Motilal who rang him up late on Saturday night asking him if some books would be available. Mr. Patel asked Pandit Motilal to send a list on Sunday morning which Pandit Motilal did and Mr. Patel asked Mr. Dhurinder, the new Secretary, to send for the Librarian who sent the books and which were straightaway supplied to Pandit Motilal without the President seeing them. In the evening, it was brought to his notice that one official refused to believe that Mr. Patel was taken unawares by Pandit Motilal's point of order because Mr. Patel had sent for books on which Pandit Motilal raised the point of order." When this was brought to his notice Mr. Patel asked the Secretary how the information went out to the Hon'ble Member concerned whom he would not name. He sent for the Librarian and asked what books were supplied.

President Patel added : "I was feeling whether I was a prisoner or the President of the Assembly, my movements being watched in this way." The President finally asked the Secretary to state the name of the correspondent of the "Daily Telegraph" London. The Secretary informed him that it was Mr. C. M. Rice.

The President said he would announce his decision next week as he proposed in the meanwhile to investigate into the assertion of the "Pioneer" that the Home Department was responsible for the propaganda.

### The Public Safety Bill.

The debate on the "Public Safety Bill" was then taken up.

Dr. SUHRAWARDY said that he agreed with Mr. McWatters that visitors from abroad and foreign propagandists acquired exaggerated importance in the eyes of unsophisticated Labour in India and that they were more potent for mischief than any Indian, however educated. He referred to the statement made by Mr. Ranga Iyer that freedom of idea and expression should be maintained and asked Mr. Ranga Iyer whether his enthusiasm had not been killed by the discussion which took place this morning. Mr. Ranga Iyer had said that they should not fear revolution in India as none had occurred during the last three thousand years. The speaker said that this was due to the fact that the benevolent rulers of India had not to come to the Assembly to get power before deporting undesirables.

Pundit Motilal NEHRU opposed the Bill and the Select Committee motion. He contended that no case had been made out for urgency or necessity of the Bill nor had it been shown why the ordinary laws or the 'lawless' law in the possession of the Government could not be utilised against those whom the Government regarded as undesirables. It was a false argument to say that merely because after Bradley and Spratt came to India there were railway disasters and strikes, there should be some law to deport such persons.

Great reliance had been made on the alleged letter of Mr. M. N. Roy.\* Having seen the alleged original of that letter he pointed out that there was no signature to the letter. Corrections in handwriting were the correction of mostly the typist's errors and even the forwarding letter was typed. Experts had pronounced, said the Government, that it was Mr. M. N. Roy's letter. Mr. Roy had not been

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\*Mr. M. N. Roy issued the following statement repudiating his authorship of the letter, regarding the organisation of Communist revolution in India, attributed to him :—

"Some days ago, the "Times" correspondent from Delhi cabled what purported to be extracts from a letter written by me to the Central Committee of the Communist Party and the Workers' and Peasants' Party in India. According to the report, this letter, alleged to be written by me, was dated sometime in December, last year, but made public by the police only a few days ago. In a subsequent message to the "Times", dated the 26th August, it is stated that in this fictitious letter I mentioned Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as "Liaison Agent between Moscow and India."

"I hereby declare that I did not address any such letter to anybody in India. The statement about my referring to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as "Liaison Agent" is a downright lie. I challenge the Government of India to produce the original of this mysterious letter with my signature.



corresponding with the Government and, therefore, there was no basis for the Government or their experts to conclude that it was written by Mr. M. N. Roy. He, therefore, refused to believe that the document produced by the Home Member was written by Mr. M. N. Roy. At any rate he refused to take it as an evidence in support of the case for bringing forward this Bill. The initial responsibility for publication of this letter lay with the Government of India and they chose a time when the Reforms were in the melting pot. The letter was dated the 30th December last, the following letter dated the 5th February and the postmark bore the date 16th May. Why did not the Government publish the letter earlier. The whole thing looked suspicious.

Sir Hari Singh Gour was prepared to accept that because there was this letter supposed to have been written by Mr. M. N. Roy therefore there should be some step taken against the Communists. The case in the Allahabad High Court had been cited as another point of argument. That case was dealt with in the ordinary process of the law. Were witnesses shot or intimidated in any way? Even the Law Member of the Government of India admitted that Europeans were not excluded from the operation of Regulation III of 1818. Why should not the Government utilise that regulation against communists, British or alien? How could any one put any confidence in the mere declaration of the Governor-General that a person was guilty of offences mentioned in the Bill. In England where dangers of communism were greater than they were or could be in India, there was a trial and conviction before punishment or exclusion or any other form. Even in the pre-war and post-war legislation against undesirable England had distinctly provided for trial. But under the Bill before the House the position would be different. It was the inherent right of every Englishman to be tried under the Habeas Corpus but that right would be denied in

"Obviously this latest 'letter of Roy' has been invented as a pretext for the proposed legislation against Communists. A cable to the 'Times' dated August 24th, gives the purport of the Public Safety (removal from India) Bill and says—'Recent publication of M. N. Roy's letter to the Communists in India has directed public attention to this evil (relation of the Indian Labour Movement with international bodies of similar character)'. If this letter proves the necessity for a new repressive legislation, why has Government been sitting tight on it all this time since December?"

"The scheme of the thing is very obvious. The Imperialist Government wants to suppress the young Labour movement in India. Some plausible pretext must be there. A 'Letter of Roy' is forged with a back date because one, supposed to be written just in time to help Government out of the difficulty, would be too ugly."

Roy concludes with the hope that the elected nationalist members of the Assembly will throw out this repressive measure.

#### How an Empire is Run.

In this connection the following extracts from the speech of Mr. Ponsonby delivered in the House of Commons on the 26th May, 1927 in connection with the debate on the Labour motion opposing the termination of Trade Agreement with Russia will be of great interest. This will show how letters are forged and photographs faked for running an Empire. Mr. Arthur Ponsonby was the Foreign Under-Secretary in the Labour Government and as such an authority on the connection between international Diplomacy and Espionage. After reading this no one will refuse to believe that the Government had no hand in manufacturing the alleged "Letter of Mr. M. N. Roy" to suit their convenience, Mr. Ponsonby said:—

"I have no respect for dirt even in high places. But what I object to more than dirt is hypocrisy which pretends that we are so pure that we do not indulge in any of these methods during war time. All this is recognised as part and parcel of war machine. You have lies, propaganda, atrocity—factories, telephone tapping, letter opening, department for forgery, department for taking photographs and that sort of things and each Government has it. We must really face fact when getting in our high moral horse that forgery, theft, lying, bribery and corruption exist in every Foreign Office and Chancery throughout the world. This weapon is used during war because it is valuable. It is used during the so-called peace because peace is used for making preparations for the next war."

When challenged by Sir Austen Chamberlain, Mr. Ponsonby said that during his career he had seen a document taken from the archives of a foreign country.

India. The Bill excluded British Indians and subjects of Indian States. What would happen to those living in French territories, in India, Pondichery and Chandernagore? There were really no Communist terrors except those contained in the propaganda conducted by the Britishers. In support he quoted an instance of the press correspondent who sitting in England or France called himself the Riga correspondent of a New York paper and sent out to the paper a stuff supplied to him in these countries. But those who visited Russia had different stories to tell. The British delegation consisting of ninety-two representatives of workmen of England and Scotland visited and reported that the art of the Government was being maintained at perfection and the people had complete confidence in the Bolshevik Government. But the Government here had described the communists as a barbarous people, cannibals etc. A good many Englishmen were invited to attend the Congress every year and as the President of the Calcutta Congress he might have to extend invitations to friends of the Congress in England and elsewhere. How was he to know that the Government would regard them otherwise? The Bill would also stand against the promotion of social and intellectual intercourse between Indians and people of other Asiatic countries.

Sir B. N. MITRA said that the House was concerned at present with the principle of the Bill only which should not be objectionable considering that every country of the world had similar powers.

Pandit Motilal—England?

Sir B. N. Mitra replied that even England had powers on the same principle though the procedure was different. Whatever be Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar's view the communist object given in literatures was objectionable.

Mr. A. N. Dutt had shown abhorrence to this propaganda. How would he like if a thousand hungry men of Burdwan attacked Mr. Dutt's House, even murdered him, took possession of his property?

Pundit Motilal—That is libel on communism.

Mr. Muhammed Yakub—Why should not they attack the house of the Maharaja of Burdwan?

Sir B. N. Mitra continued that Mr. Gandhi's refusal to let the Ahmedabad Trade Union to join the Trade Union Congress was significant. Then again the causes of strikes were not hunger but the prolongation caused hunger. Who promoted this? Only this morning he heard that Mr. S. C. Bose, for whom the speaker entertained admiration, had arranged for the termination of Jamshedpur strike but Mr. Homi was trying to break up the arrangement. "This to my mind is writing on the wall." Mr. Joshi may have another inference. I do not know what happened to Mr. Joshi. He is becoming pessimistic.

Mr. Joshi—You are its cause (laughter).

Sir B. N. Mitra asked Mr. Joshi to deny that the textile workers' wages were now higher than the rise of the cost of living since 1914 justified.

Mr. Joshi interrupting denied this.

Sir B. N. Mitra quoted the improvement in the Postal employees' service as an instance of good faith of the Government to improve the economic condition of workers. He was unable to attach special value to Mr. M. N. Roy's letter but to a man of commonsense it indicated the writing on the wall. As regards the exact machinery it struck his financial mind that action under regulations would fill the jails and it would be an invitation to the unemployed of other countries to feed in Indian Jails. On the other hand the proposed measure granted merely a third class passage. He said he was a regular reader of the "Pioneer." He found the paper support the reference to the Select Committee. Probably it changed the opinion after learning the Home Member's speech.

Mr. JAYAKAR said that before coming to Simla he was informed that Lala Lajpat Rai had a free mind to vote either way. After listening to the debate he undoubtedly had a distrust in the Government, but wished to gather facts. Mr. Crerar's Speech was like that of a family priest where benedictions were uttered with the statements made which Mr. Jayakar was not expected to refute or challenge, but silently accept. He was convinced that no case had been made out for the Bill. Mr. Jayakar was sorry that the issues were confused. The

cry that the Hindu and Muslim religions were in danger was raised by Sir Denys Bray. Did it strike the Government now, after 150 years' advance granted to Christian missionaries and societies and legal concessions given to converts from Hinduism? He frankly stated his absolute distrust in the executive. The Rowlatt Bill caused a sensation, but not once used. These panicky legislations were colossal blunders. Lala Lajpat Rai was deported. The Government only said that they were sorry. Similarly was Mr. S. C. Mitra, an ex-detenu member of the House, a revolutionary. Was Mr. S. C. Bose one? The Government's source of information was vitiated. Mr. Jayakar understood that the British Government wished to deal with the Soviet cautiously. Some members of the British Parliament had important concessions in Soviet Russia. Why do you paint Russia ugly? Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar's power of observation gave him enough idea of Russian life in ten days which the officials might take two years to learn. Mr. Jayakar held that the Bill was an extraordinary measure and wanted summary procedure to deal with communists. Mr. Jayakar held that every power proposed under the new law already existed except that relating to trade disputes and this power, if used, would be most dangerous in time of strikes. The Bill was most carelessly drafted, but the real object was to avoid the noise. The Government wanted to have a sharp weapon to do the work without sensation. Mr. Jayakar confessed that if Pandit Motilal was sitting in the front bench under the Swaraj Government Mr. Jayakar would support such a Bill because of his confidence in the Executive, but the speaker was surprised that Mr. Crerar had not even taken into confidence any non-official leader of the House. Why not do so, for these men would in another twenty-five years be ruling India? Why not take them into confidence and show your cards? Mr. Jayakar next discussed the nature of the Government's facts and said that past experience had made him sceptical. This Government indeed suffered most from the defect that it had not the means of knowing the truth.

Maulvi Muhammad Yakub requested the Chair not to hold a special sitting of the Assembly to-morrow in view of the strain caused on the members by incessant work.

Mr. Crerar represented that the Government were anxious that the Bill should be disposed of either way.

The President said that in the peculiar circumstances he was desirous of holding a sitting to-morrow when he would accept the closure motion at the end of the sitting and take the vote. This was agreed to and the House adjourned.

On the 15TH SEPTEMBER Mr. K. C. NEOGY said that the whole subject of Communism in India was very lightly treated in the Home Department publication "India in 1926-27." Mr. J. Coatman had stated in the book that Communism had failed or almost failed so far as India was concerned. It was a labour leader who was responsible for the Bombay strike. But the Government sought to stop strikes by excluding foreigners from India. The Government need have no fear of Communists as according to the latest communication from the Communist International of Moscow there could be no revolution in India as Indians distrusted Whites even if they were Communists.

As regards Sir B. N. Mitra's suggestion that various railway accidents and strikes were due to Communist activities the speaker said that supposing that they were responsible for those acts of violence and murder, would it be the right course to send those guilty persons out of the country without trial and leave Indian victims to suffer?

Concluding the speaker said that the draftsman had inadvertently given the House the benefit of his opinion by writing in clause one that this Act might by called the Public Safety (Removal from India) Bill.

Mr. BELVI contended that the existing ordinary law with the prince of all sections namely, Sec. 144 of Cr. P. C. and Sec. 124 of the Penal Code were more than enough to deal with the contingency. He refused to believe that the Russians of the Communists were so bad as painted. He quoted several extracts about condi-

tions in Russia from well-known English writers to prove that the situation was quite different from that depicted by the Home Member. When Mr. Belvi continued to quote extracts the President ruled the quotations out.

Continuing, Mr. Belvi said that the spirit of autocracy was abroad in this country.

The President asked Mr. Belvi to withdraw the words which Mr. Belvi did.

Concluding, Mr. Belvi referred to the opinions of other English writers and contended that the condition of the workmen in Russia was certainly good.

Mr. Jamnadas MEHTA declared that the Bill was not legislation but the latest bureaucratic device to snatch liberty of speech and liberty of thought. They could not trust the Government with these extra legal powers. "We cannot entrust you with the liberty of a pariah dog much less with the liberty of human beings."

Had not Mr. Churchill said that for the sake of keeping their rule Englishmen would even lie. Mr. M. N. Roy's letter was a forgery. Who could believe it genuine when they remembered how the Arcos Raid was carried without the discovery of the supposed stolen document. But Mr. Jamnadas asked what was there to frighten any body in Mr. Roy's letter, for it enumerated the programme of reform which was already before the country. Only they must prevent violence and his reply was that the Congress creed stood for non-violence. The Bill, if passed, would give a blank cheque to the Government who could at once proceed to action against persons like Mrs. Besant. He refused to be stampeded into agreeing to the suggested course.

Sir George RAINY urging the Assembly to support the Select Committee motion requested the members to display at voting time the same sense of responsibility and broad judgment which had characterised the debate. He wondered why the Swarajists should object to the Government of India arming themselves with powers under the Bill to deport foreigners and Britishers, for who knew it might be found useful for the Swaraj Government. And he imagined Mr. Jamnadas Mehta under the Swaraj Government standing probably in the reserved coast of Bombay ordering that those who came from England or other foreign countries be sent back. But Mr. Jayakar in a speech had declared that the Assembly should not trust the Government of India because they either abused power or did not use powers. Which was the apprehension moving in Mr. Jayakar's minds? Mr. Jayakar replied first that powers were not unnecessary. Secondly, they are mischievously used. Sir George Rainy assured that powers sought under the Bill provided a second line of defence for obviously the Government would first exercise the passport regulations more stringently against the undesirable. He, however, agreed that the House should maturely consider the necessity of arming the Government with these powers.

Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar obtained knowledge of Russia after ten days' stay there whereas Dr. Subhawardy pointed out that he might have been under the Russian genius for stage-management. Why, there was a story that when once the Czarina wanted a tour of dominions, the sun-dried bureaucrats arranged for a few villages which were in excellent state of prosperity and the Czarina was very pleased.

Mr. Doraiswami Iyengar interrupted as if that was not done in India.

Sir George.—I say as regards internal conditions of Russia you cannot judge by a few days' stay but by prolonged stay and actual contact with the daily lives of the people. The Government case is not that the condition exists in Russia which in certain respects are deplorable. The Government case is that the driving power of the Communist Party and the methods whereby they want to achieve their ends are ruthless and unscrupulous, resulting infliction and calamity on the people concerned. (Cheers from official benches.)

It was not the Russian Government we are dealing with but the Communist Party with its headquarters in Russia. If they were to wait until the Government had to produce more evidence, then mischief might have been done before the remedy was applied. There were good many facts well-known during the last eighteen months which gave cause of serious anxiety. It was the aim of the Government to deal with the Communists in the mildest manner possible that the Bill had been placed before the Assembly for vote after due realisation of all issues involved.

Pandit Madan Mohan MALAVIYA opposed the Bill because it contained a dangerous principle, namely, that a man could be deported without trial. He had no sympathy for the Communist and it would be his endeavour to see that Communism did not spread in India, especially at a time when India was on the eve of a great political change and expected the administration to be in the hands of Indians by 1930. Incidentally, he regretted that Mr. Shabnaz had misrepresented his community when he said that Muslim opinion was against the Nehru Report. No doubt a body of Muslim opinion was against it, but to say that Moslem opinion was against it was incorrect.

At a time when Indians were expected to see the transference of power from the present administration into the hands of the elected representatives of the people he did not like to spread the dangerous Communistic principles. Let it be remembered that the Communists themselves knew that their doctrines would not spread in an agricultural country like India without an agrarian revolt. That was clear in the Communist literature. But what had the Government of India done to prevent such a revolt coming about? Any revolution was the result of injustice or incapacity of the Government. If any revolution were to take place it would be definitely attributed to the incapacity of the Government of India. For who did not know that by forcing down the 18½ ratio on the country under circumstances which it was better not to mention, the Government of India had struck a blow to the agriculturists of India whose purchasing power had been reduced by 12 and half per cent and there had been a loss to them of thirty to forty crores of agricultural money. Another result of the ratio legislation was that the Indian industrialists could not compete with the foreigners and they had to shut down their mills and to-day eighty-six mills in Bombay were closed for five months and more. So, even if this legislation was passed without any alteration it would not help the Government to suppress Communism spreading to India because the root cause remained untouched. The Nehru Committee's Report pointed the way in which the Indians liked to bring about better relations between the capitalists, labourers, agriculturists and zemindars.

The principle of the Bill was that the Bolsheviks should be deported without trial. That principle none could support. The non-officials were not friends of the Communists, but friends of liberty. Hence the opposition to the Bills as framed. In 1908 the Government passed a law under which no person could be punished or deported except after trial by three Judges of the High Court. But twenty years later the Government has not grown wiser, but the other way about. For here was a Bill which purported to empower the Executive of the Government to deport without trial any person whom they considered undesirable. So long as life was in him he would not agree that principle being embodied in the Indian Statute. He was at one with the Government in suppressing communism, but he contended that the ordinary law was adequate to deal with all such cases.

Sir George Rainy had hinted that passport regulations should be strictly enforced to prevent these men. Well and good, but if still they came then the person whom the Government found here undesirable should be given an opportunity to appear before a tribunal of three Judges to defend themselves with the aid of lawyers, if necessary in camera, and then, if they could not satisfy the courts, they might be punished by deportation or otherwise. So long as the Government did not agree to change the principle of the Bill in this way in the Select Committee he would oppose the Bill.

Mr. CRERAR was cheered as he rose to reply to the four days' debate. He said that in spite of the eloquent denunciations of the opposition his main contentions remained uncontroverted. The three fundamental points were, firstly, that a powerful organisation was busy attacking the Indian social structure; secondly, that it had for this purpose devised certain expedients and, thirdly, that its agents were pursuing these activities in India. The House must consider these before refusing to attend to the measure. He regretted that the laws in no way helped them to carry out the object of the Bill, namely, the removal of certain elements from the midst of the Indian Society.

Pandit Malaviya : Why not remove them after conviction ?

Mr. Crerar said that Pandit Motilal's point that the Secretary of State had the power of expulsion did not cover all such cases. The English Law provided measures much more summary in character. It was further argued that the ingredients of the proposed legislation were already contained in the Criminal Law. He was afraid that there had been a misconception of the whole object of the Bill which was preventive, while the Penal Code was punitive. As regards Pandit Malaviya's remarks, some of the objects which the critics had in view would be relevant to the Select Committee.

Pandit Malaviya : Does the Home Member agree that the question of defence in a judicial trial could be raised in the Select Committee ?

Mr. Crerar : I am prepared to consider some of the objections compatible with the object and purpose of the Bill.

Pandit Malaviya : Does he agree to the right of defence and trial by a tribunal : I want a straight answer.

Mr. Crerar : I am not prepared to admit that it would not be compatible with the object and purpose of the Bill.

Mr. Jayakar had stated that he would be prepared to give this power to the

Swaraj Government which, to Mr. Crerar's mind, meant at least support of the principle of the Bill.

Sir Purshottamdas : What is the Government's intention regarding the prevention of the spread of Communism in India ?

Mr. Crerar : The Government are examining the position very closely and would take such action as they consider necessary.

Concluding Mr. Crerar said that the Government of India had a greater responsibility than the Governments of other countries, but in order that this measure might be successful in its purpose of expelling the dangerous element from India the Government must have the collaboration and co-operation of every citizen and particularly this Legislature.

#### Result of Voting.

The House divided first on the circulation motion of Mr. Amar Nath Dutt which was defeated by fifty-nine against sixty-three votes.

Then, before the motion for the Select Committee was put to the vote the question whether Mr. Amarnath Dutt (Swarajist) should be on the Committee or not was voted upon and it was decided by votes (Government, Nationalists and a few Swarajists remaining neutral) that his name should be included. Then came the question of the inclusion of Mr. Mahomed Shafee, a Swarajist.

The House again divided and by twenty-seven against fifty-five votes he was eliminated. This time the Government and the nominated members voted solidly against it. Thereupon Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar and Mr. Amar Nath Dutt refused to serve on the Committee, the President explaining how difficult it was to get scored out at this time. Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar regretted the inconvenience, but said that in the peculiar circumstances he could not help it. Mr. Amar Nath Dutt said that after the unchivalrous attitude of the Government in eliminating the Swarajists from the Committee he had no desire to serve on it. Similarly, Mr. Gangananda Sinha, Mr. Nirmal Chunder Chunder and Mr. Ranjiva Prasad Singh declined to serve for same reasons.

At the end a Committee consisting of Mr. Fazul Ibrahim (Independent), Sir Victor Sassoon (European group), Sir Zulfikarali Khan, Mr. Crerar (Home Member,) and Dr. Gour, the mover was appointed by sixty-two against fifty-nine votes with instruction to report within three days. The House then adjourned.

#### Trade Unions Act.

On the 17TH SEPTEMBER the Assembly met after the week-end recess. Mr. A. C. McWatters introduced a Bill amending the Indian Patents and Designs Act, and then moved for the consideration of the Bill amending the Indian Trade Unions Act.

Mr. Joshi wished the Government to make it clear as to whether the Registrar was a Judicial officer and whether the Government put pressure on the Registrar or his staff to induce them not to register Trade Unions of Government servants. Mr. D. Iyengar was of the opinion that the powers of the High Court were not clearly defined in the Bill.

Mr. McWatters confessed that he was not a "Legal Pandit" and said that Mr. Iyengar would have helped considerably by bringing forward an amendment. As regards Mr. Joshi's point the matter was under the active consideration of the Government of India. The Bill was passed.

On the motion of Mr. J. A. Shillidy, a Bill amending the Indian Succession Act was passed. The House next passed a Bill amending certain enactments and repealing certain other enactments.

#### Income-Tax Amend. Bill.

Sir B. N. Mitra moved that the Bill amending the Indian Income-tax Act be taken into consideration.

Mr. B. Das wished the Government to ensure when an All-India cadre of Commissioners of Income-tax was created, that the standard of morality and manners of Income-tax officers would improve. He did not wish the Income-Tax Department to be worse than the Police and the C. I. D.

Sir B. N. Mitra said that it was hardly fair for Mr. Das to cast unmerited aspersions on a body of public servants. (A Voice : "Merited or unmerited?") Every Income-tax officer at one time or other must be in disfavour with the people whom he taxes. He wished Mr. Das had given him specific cases of ill-treatment. He moved that the Bill be passed.

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh said that last year he brought to the notice of Sir Basil Blackett on the floor of the House a mischievous circular issued by the Commissioner of Income-tax in Bihar and Orissa.

Instead of meeting his points Sir Basil tried to evade them and defended the Commissioner. It was then stated that it was a confidential circular. Mr. Ram Narayan Singh said that it was clear from the above instance that the Government was hopelessly rotten.

President: "Order! order! Is this an occasion to say this?"

Mr. Nayudu said that a conference of income-tax assesses in his Province recently passed a resolution against the lack of good manners on the part of income-tax officers.

Mr. Amar Nath Dutt welcomed the principles of the Bill and said that he would be glad if the Government organised an All-India service for the Income-tax Department so that there might be less corruption.

Sir B. N. Mitra, replying, said that the Opposition members would be faced with the same difficulty of getting money when they succeeded in ousting the present Government. He added that the Bill would improve the efficiency of income-tax administration. The Bill was then passed.

#### Madras Salt Act.

The Bill amending the Madras Salt Act enabling any officer to make an arrest under Section 49 and grant bail was then passed.

#### Indian Insurance Companies Act.

On the motion of Sir George Rainy a Bill to further amend the Indian Assurance Companies Act of 1912 was then passed. The Bill provides inter alia the submission of returns of any Assurance business other than Life Assurance. Sir Parshottamdas intervened to invite the attention of the Government to the necessity of greater control by the Government over the Assurance business in India.

#### Match Industry Protection Bill.

Sir George Rainy moved the consideration of the Match Industry Protection Bill. He explained that the Indian prices were regulated entirely by internal competition. The consumer obtained them as cheap as he was likely to get them. What the Tariff Board established was that the industry would be able to resist world competition without the assistance of the Government. Government did not contemplate keeping the Protective duty high for long and intended to review the situation if the Swedish Company tried to acquire a monopoly in India. Sir George personally hoped that the situation would never arise and also thought that if the need for protection arose the Swedish Company would not be so short-sighted as not to reconstruct itself with a Rupee capital and a proportion of Indian Directors.

Mr. Seeha Iyengar referred to the unscrupulous methods adopted by the Swedish Combine as a result of which he feared that the indigenous industry might suffer. He quoted from the Tariff Board's report to show that the Combine was selling at an unfair price.

Mr. B. Das protested against the Tariff Board's statement that Companies with foreign capital could flourish in India. There was already no work for the Board which, he said, should be abolished.

Sir George Rainy disagreed with the views of Mr. Das. Government would certainly draw the attention of the Forest Research Institute to the fact that methods for promoting the match industry should be further explored.

He told Mr. Belvi that the Forest Department was a provincial transferred subject in the Bombay Presidency but he would bring his point to the notice of the Bombay Government. The Government of India would certainly take special precautions to see that the Swedish Combine did not prove a danger to indigenous industry by establishing as a monopolist concern. For the present Government agreed with the Tariff Board that they would be justified in not interfering. The motion for the consideration of the Bill was carried.

Sir George Rainy admired Mr. Joshi's consistency and doggedness (Applause) but the amendment proposed by him was valueless and could be evaded by all the companies going into liquidation and assuming new names or joint stock companies becoming private companies. Moreover, the restrictions could only apply to British India and therefore drive the match factories into the Indian States.

The amendment was rejected and the Bill was passed without it. The House then adjourned.

#### Constitution of New Assembly Office.

The Government of India's Despatch to the Secretary of State for India on the constitution of a separate self-contained office for the Legislative Assembly was placed on the table of the Assembly on this day (17th Sept.).

The Despatch recalls the history of this question as raised in the Chamber from time to time and declares that Sir Frederic Whyte, in February 1924, concurred with the Government's statement that, in the interests both of economy and efficiency, separation was not desirable. But since then the position has changed by the appointment of an elected President. The Despatch continues :—

"It appears to be held in certain sections of the House that the independence of the elected President is threatened by the close contact into which he is brought with the official view owing to the fact that the Secretary of the Assembly is also Secretary of the Legislative Department and as such a member of the Legislative Assembly. This view is not shared by us, but we do not wish to appear to be resisting the wishes of the President supported by any action of the Assembly in this matter. It is our wish not only that the President should be independent, but also that there be no room for the suggestion that the present constitution of the Assembly establishment is maintained with a view to curbing his independence.

#### President's Independence Affected.

"When, therefore, the President presented the Government in August 1927, his scheme for the separation of the Assembly establishment, which is attached to this Despatch, we felt ourselves obliged in examining it to take account of the suggestion that the present system affected prejudicially the independence of the President and we have reached the conclusion that the time has come for separating the Assembly establishment from the Legislative Department. In reaching this conclusion we have been influenced not only by the feeling that the Government should not be subjected to the charge, however false, of exercising an improper influence over the President, but by other and more cogent reasons.

#### Assembly Establishment.

"In the first place we may be said to have accepted publicly the principle of separate establishment in the debates on the motions of Rao Bahadur Subrahmanayam in September, 1922 and of Mr. Ginwala on March 15, 1923, and though we might, with reason, continue to postpone the application of the principle for some time yet we should certainly be met with a strong demand for separate establishment when the new constitution comes into operation. It is in our view preferable to have the change made now, at a time of comparative administrative ease, than await the introduction of the reformed constitution with all the administrative turmoil which must come with it. It is possible that the establishment now proposed by us will require enlargement to meet the needs of the new constitution, but the addition to the existing organization will be an easier matter than setting up a new organization.

"We have considered as an alternative the possibility of having an officer of the Legislative Department of a lower rank than the Secretary of the Department appointed Secretary of the Assembly by the Governor-General. This would practically mean the separation within the Department for the period of the conduct of the business of the Assembly. We are satisfied, however, that such a procedure would not meet the wishes of the President and the Assembly and we think it would be said, not without some justification, that the Secretary of the Assembly who was subordinate to the Secretary of the Legislative Department would be in a somewhat invidious position so long as the Secretaries of the departments of the Government of India are required to serve as members of either Chamber. The exercise by the Secretary of the Legislative Department of the control over the Secretary of the Assembly who was in fact an officer subordinate to him in the Department would be apprehended and the cry would continue that the independence of the Chair was in danger.

#### Council of State.

"Before we enter into a detailed examination of the scheme proposed by the President we think it right to explain why we are not at the same time proposing to set up a separate establishment for the Council of State or an establishment jointly with that of the Legislative Assembly.

"In the first place there has been no demand either from the President or from members of the Council of State and so long as the President is appointed by the Governor-General it is not expected that there will be any such demand. In the second place, owing to the feeling of jealousy which the Assembly entertains towards the Council of State it would not be possible to have a joint establishment for the two Chambers. Lastly, the volume of work transacted by the Council of State is so much less than that transacted by the Assembly that it would, in our opinion, be an improper expenditure of public funds to set up a separate establishment for the Council of State with the separation of the Assembly staff.



## Assembly Staff.

"According to our proposals it is possible to set against the new appointment of Secretary to the Legislative Assembly the abolition of the Secretary in the Legislative Department, but it would not be possible to make any further reduction in the staff of the Legislative Department even though a separate Secretary were to be constituted for the Council of State. We have accordingly reached the conclusion that for the present we should separate the staff of the Legislative Assembly only. The sanction of your Lordship is required to the creation, as a permanent basis, of the new appointments of Secretary, Deputy Secretary and Assistant Secretary of the Assembly and to the abolition of the appointment of additional Joint Secretary in the Legislative Department. As the last mentioned post is borne on the cadre of the Indian Civil Service its abolition will involve a reduction of the cadre of that service by one superior and one inferior post,

## Proposal For Pay.

"The establishment which we propose for the new Assembly office it set out in Appendix C. It will be observed that the President in his scheme proposes a Secretary on Rs. 3,000 per month and a Deputy Secretary on Rs. 1,750 per month. We propose that the pay of the Secretary should be Rs. 2,500 rising to Rs. 3,250 by annual increments of Rs. 75, and that the pay of the Deputy Secretary should be Rs. 1,500 rising to Rs. 2,000 by annual increments of Rs. 50. The reason for putting these two posts on an incremental pay is that incumbents cannot look to any promotion outside the Assembly office and that each will, in the ordinary course, hold his appointment for a long term of years.

"The Secretary and his assistants under the titles of Deputy Secretary and Assistant Secretary will be appointed by the Governor-General under rule 5 of the Indian Legislative Rules. The appointment of Secretary should be included in the list of posts in the upper-grade qualifying for superior pension under article 475A of the Civil Service Regulations. We also propose that the appointment should be added to those specified in rule 98 of the Fundamental Rules. The incumbent of the appointment will ordinarily be domiciled in Asia and in the absence of special provision, he would be governed by the ordinary leave rules contained in the fundamental rules as he will usually not obtain leave save during the intervals between sessions of the Assembly. He should, we think, receive more favourable treatment in the matter of taking short leave on full pay which is accorded to officers to whom Rule 98 applies.

"An additional reason for this proposal is that in future the appointment is likely to be filled either direct from the Bar or by a succession of the Deputy Secretary who will probably himself have been recruited from the Bar; so that in either case the holder of the appointment of Secretary will have entered the service at a comparatively advanced age.

## President's Demand Denied.

"On the question of the status of the new office we are not in agreement with the President or, so far as we understand, with the members of the Assembly who are asking for a separate establishment. The demand of the members of the Assembly has generally been expressed in the form of a demand for an establishment of their own, independent of Government control and responsible only to the Assembly. This demand is reflected in the scheme of the President in the following sentence:—

"Moreover, members of the Assembly hesitate at present to ask the Legislative Department to get their own work done but with a separate office the position will be quite different, and it is apprehended that there will be a good deal of extra work thrown on the new office.

"In other words it is anticipated by the President that the service of a separate establishment will be at the disposal of members for preparation on questions, resolutions, Bills and any other work which members may require of them.

"Again, the President describes the demands as a demand for an office of his own. Our proposal is that the office of the Legislative Assembly should to all intents and purposes be an independent office. The requirements of the constitution demand that it should be linked with the Imperial Secretariat and the natural status for it is that of an attached office, that is to say, an office attached to one of the Departments of the Government of India at the head of which will be the Secretary of the Legislative Assembly.

## Clerk of the House.

"In reaching our conclusions as to the relations between the President and the Secretary of the Assembly we have been guided by what we understand to be the constitution of the establishment of the House of Commons. The Secretary of the Legislative Assembly

will correspond to the Clerk of the House and the Deputy Secretary and Assistant Secretary will correspond to the Clerk's assistants. The remaining members of the establishment will be appointed by the Secretary in the first instance from members of the legislative department who will be placed at his disposal for that purpose. Thereafter the establishment will be recruited by the Secretary of the Assembly in the manner in which the ministerial establishments of the Government of India Secretariat are recruited, and will serve under precisely the same conditions in respect of pay and discipline as those establishments.

#### His Position.

"The Secretary of the Assembly will have the ordinary powers of the head of an attached office and the President of the Assembly will not have anything to do with the details of the administration of this office. The Secretary will be in close relations on the one hand with the President of the Assembly and on the other hand with the leader of the House but he will be subordinate to neither.

"Our conclusion then is that the office of the Assembly should be an attached office working under its own head, the Secretary, and administering itself. The Assembly office will be attached to whichever department of the Government of India it may be found most convenient to attach it, but in respect of matters involving expenditure and of all financial matters generally it will maintain direct relations with the Finance Department.

"It will be observed that in the President's scheme it is proposed that the president should frame budget of the Assembly office and that the budget so framed should be accepted without question by the department which presents it, and the position of chartered High Courts in this respect is cited as analogous. We are unable to accept this claim of the president either on behalf of himself or on behalf of the High Courts.

#### Bureaucratic Evasion.

"A reference to paragraph 8 of the Letters Patent of the Calcutta High Court is sufficient for this purpose. Budgets of high courts are included under the provincial head "Administration of justice" and in their preparation are liable to control—in the case of the Calcutta High Court by the Governor-General-in-Council and in the case of other high courts, by the Governor-in-Council. Naturally the views of the President of the Assembly on the financial provision required for the office as on all other important matters connected with the office will receive the closest attention but it would, in our opinion, be altogether inappropriate that the President of the Assembly who is not an official should be put in the position of the official head of the Assembly office.

"Paragraph 8 of the President's scheme sets out to deal with the position and status of the new office but it does not make it clear what degree of control over the office should be vested in the President. In conversation, however, it has been brought out that the intention of the President was that he should have control of the office. In fact, that it should be his office and not the office of the Secretary. Failing that position being allotted to him he has claimed that he should have the same power of dismissal of members of the Assembly office other than the Secretary, Deputy Secretary and Assistant Secretary as is vested in the Speaker of the House of Commons over the staff of the clerk of the House by statute. The view which the Government of India take is that members of the Assembly office, both those now to be transferred from the Legislative Department and also those to be appointed later on to fill vacancies, must all be Government servants.

"We have not found ourselves able to accept either of these proposals for two reasons. In the first place, the salaries of these officers will, unless they should happen, and this is not to be expected, to be persons appointed by or with the approval of His Majesty or of your lordship in Council, be votable, and consequently the Assembly will have such control as is reasonable over them. In the second place, we consider the President has an adequate remedy in his right of direct access to the Governor-General in the exercise of which he will always be in a position to make representations to him against the conduct of the Secretary, Deputy Secretary or Assistant Secretary.

"We have stated above that we are asking your lordship's sanction to the abolition of the post of Additional Joint Secretary in the Legislative Department in the creation of the post of Secretary of the Assembly; our intention being that Mr. S. C. Gupta, the present incumbent of the post of the Additional Joint Secretary in the Legislative Department, should be appointed to the post of Secretary of the Assembly. His initial pay in the post should be fixed by operation of Rule 22 of the fundamental rules at Rs. 3,025 per mensem. We trust that the abolition of the appointment of Additional Joint Secretary will be permanent but we cannot of course anticipate what will be the requirements of the Department under a new constitution and we must utter a warning that it is not

unlikely that the additional temporary appointment of Additional Joint Secretary will be necessary for some time when the Government of India are considering the report of the Statutory Commission and, thereafter, when they are putting into operation the scheme of the reformed constitution.

#### Legal Adviser.

"It will be observed that the scheme both as submitted by the President and as revised by us, does not provide separately and expressly for personal staff of the President. In effect, the Marshall, a retired Indian Army officer is of that staff, as also is one stenographer who has the title of Personal Assistant to the President and is really Private Secretary to the President. There are also certain "chaprasis" who are attached to the President. We propose, and the President agrees, that he should select his Personal Assistant from stenographers in the Assembly office and that the Assembly office should place at his disposal "chaprasis" in suitable numbers. The Marshall will continue to be appointed by the Governor-General-in-Council.

"Neither our scheme nor that of the President provides for the appointment of a separate legal adviser for the President. The question of obtaining independent legal advice for the President is likely to come up, but the President has so far made no proposal and as he has expressed a desire that the Assembly office scheme should be settled without delay, we have not thought fit to await his proposals for the appointment of a legal adviser at present. It seems unlikely that the President would be in a position to secure the whole-time services of counsel and it is more probable he will ask for a sum to be provided in the Budget to meet expenses of consulting counsel from time to time."

#### EDUCATION FOR GIRLS.

On the 18TH SEPTEMBER the resolution on girl's education in minor administrations, which are under the direct care of the Government of India covered the whole sitting.

Many were the speeches delivered on the occasion and various points of view were urged by the members. Mr. Bajpai's task was easy because he had up his sleeves the very answer the House wanted, namely, that the Government should appoint a Committee to go into the question of making a more rapid advance in the cause of education of boys and girls in these areas, especially among the untouchable classes. This conclusion was not given off hand but was the result of decisions taken on the resolution of Mr. Jayakar, passed by the Assembly last session.

Naturally the announcement aggrieved Rev. Chatterjee who wished the credit for making the Government appoint the Committee go to him, so that in reply to the debate he launched on criticisms entirely uncalled for and did not care for persistent calls from all sections of the House to withdraw the resolution.

The Assembly, however, resolved to adopt Mr. Mukhtar Singh's amendment in preference to the resolution of Rev. Chatterjee. This took Rev. Chatterjee unawares and he appealed to the Chair now to let him withdraw the resolution. But it was too late as votes had already been called.

When the amendment was carried, Rev. Chatterjee again tried to retrieve his position. But then his resolution was no longer in the field but was of another member. The House passed Mr. Mukhtar Singh's proposition and then adjourned.

#### The Coastal Trade Bill.

On the 20TH SEPTEMBER further consideration was resumed of the motion that the Bill to reserve the coastal traffic of India to Indian vessels, be referred to a select committee.

Mr. Shanmukham CHETTY said that there were numerous examples in the political and economic history of this country when the rights of India came into conflict with the interests of Britain. In the struggle the interests of Britain achieved their purpose. Thirty-one maritime nations of the world had accepted the theory that the reservation of coastal traffic by any country would not conflict with the international law.

As regards the first, Mr. Chetty wished the question to be dealt with fully when the objection of Europeans came up for discussion. The Commerce Member had said that, by passing this Bill, India would incur the displeasure of South Africa. The speaker was of opinion that this was not a discriminating measure, and should not offend any nation. It was merely to develop Indian shipping without injuring the interests of any other nation.

Mr. J. D. STUART (Burma, official) asked the House not to include Burma in the scheme unless they had a clear mandate from Burma. He remembered that when the Mercantile Marine Committee visited Burma, the Chairman asked one witness why no Burman troubled to reply to the questionnaire. The obvious answer was that Burmans were not interested as to who was in charge the import, export and shipping trade.

Continuing, Mr. Stuart said that surplus rice was of no value to Burma without sufficient shipping services to carry it to its destination in the desired time. "I would like to see an Indian mercantile and a Burman mercantile marine established, but you are asking cultivators to take complete risk in this scheme of coastal reservation. What is the cultivator who forms 90 per cent of the population to gain out of it? Nothing. Did any sentimental reasons appeal to him? No."

"During my 22 years' service in Burma," said Mr. Stuart, "I have known that a feeling exists for the separation of Burma from India. As a member of the I. C. S., I may favour the maintenance of the existing connection, but Burma has taken some hard knocks in recent times as a result of the imposition of the steel duty for the protection of the Indian industry, and the imposition of export duty on rice. Now you are going to ask Burma to take this great new risk. I submit that the division of the advantage and disadvantage between India and Burma seems to be that Burma takes all the risks, and India takes all the halfpences." In conclusion, Mr. Stuart said, "the time may not be ripe for the separation of Burma; but by making this law, you will be forcing separation on Burma before the time comes."

Sir Victor SASSOON, speaking as the representative of the Millowners' Association, Bombay, and not as a member of the European group, explained that his Association supported not the principle of the Bill but the principle underlying the Bill. He explained the distinction between the two by illustrating the case of a patient who wished to be cured, but not by taking the medicine prescribed. The principle underlying the Bill was to provide for the employment of Indian tonnage in the coastal trade of India.

Mr. Birla had suggested that the average profit of the British India Steam Navigation Company was 22 per cent. Sir Victor Sassoon asked whether the company was earning this on the coastal trade to-day, or whether this dividend was being paid out of the interest on the accumulated reserves. If it were not, there was no reason why the Scindia Company should not make the same profit. He asked whether the House would agree to guarantee the textile industry by the entire abolition of foreign imports of textile for five years, on an assurance that the industry would expand to meet the demand. There would be the cry of "Supply will fall short of the demand." This objection was stronger in the case of shipping when they had a small tonnage.

In conclusion, Sir Victor said, "License the coastal trade if you like. Ensure that the personnel will be all Indian as soon as you can train your nationals. Lay down the principle of your mail contracts, Government support to go to ships owned by rupee companies. In all these, I will support you, but on a bill like the one before you, unless it is radically altered, I will offer the most strenuous resistance I have in my power to do."

Lala Lajpat RAI said that the Commerce Member's statement that adoption of the Bill would adversely affect the position of Indians in South Africa, was not only "fallacious", but the poorest argument. The Dominion Government were asked merely to recognize the status of Indians as the Union's nationals, and not to guarantee special advantages. On the other hand, Britishers in India treated Indian Nationals "with contempt." They wanted the "continuance of racial discrimination, and exclusive treatment." There is racial discrimination in railways, trades—all along the line (European Group: No, no.)

Lala Lajpat Rai: Yes, yes. I will say it a hundred times.

Continuing, Lala Lajpat Rai said: "We are trying to do what other countries have done to build up the shipping industry. Who can deny that the whole British industry was built in the 17th century on treasures taken

away from India. You killed our shipping by the exercise of political power. It is perfectly legitimate to rehabilitate our industry."

Lala Lajpat Rai then read a telegram from the Bengal Mahomedan Association, Rangoon, which stated that the Bengal Steam Navigation Company started with Rs. 10 lakhs in 1922, but was killed by competition because the foreign companies reduced freights. The New Bengal-Burma Steam Navigation Company started with Rs. 25 lakhs. The competitors reduced the passage rates from 14 to 4. The telegram declared that it was impossible for any Indian company to compete in the face of this rate war.

Lala Lajpat Rai, in conclusion, said: "This state of affairs must be stopped. If the principle of the Bill is acceptable, the select committee could modify it to ensure fair play."

Mr. BAJPAI said that judging from the speeches he had formed the opinion that there was no provision for the safeguard of European capital or the capital of Foreign Nationals which was already invested in the shipping trade.

The House ought to consider the question as to whether the principle of the Bill will in any way weaken the struggle which the Government of India in consultation and co-operation with Indian legislators and others are carrying out to secure equality of status for Indians settled beyond the seas.

He was of the opinion that the passing of this Bill would weaken the chance of getting equality for Indians resident outside India.

Lala Lajpat Rai: "Who has accepted that principle?"

Mr. Bajpai: "Because that principle has not been accepted it does not follow that it will not be followed hereafter."

Mr. Haji Qasim supported the Bill but wished the Select Committee to go into the question of attracting Indian capital to the shipping industry, the purchase of ocean-going ships, by Indian Companies and the modification of the Bill in order to bring within the purview of the Bill, companies like the Bombay Steam Navigation Company.

Mr. Haji replying on the debate informed Mr. Qasim that the Bombay Navigation Company not only accepted the principle of the Bill but also most of the details which it contained. He drew the attention of the Government to the fact that when the Government accepted the policy of allotting 60 per cent of Indians in all Indian enterprises there was no protest from South Africa.

He read out a cablegram from the Indian Merchants' Chamber at Mombasa supporting the Bill and inferred that Indians resident abroad would not have to suffer hardships when the measure was passed.

Sir George Rainy, winding up the debate, urged that the proposal was economically unsound and was not in the interests of India. It was likely, he said, to be ineffective owing to the existence of non-British ports in the coast of India. It was also unfair to Burma and involved the principle of racial discrimination. For these reasons the Government asked the House not to accept the Bill. The House then agreed to add the names of Messrs. Haji, Qasim, Munshi and Lamb on the select committee. The motion for a select committee was accepted by 71 votes to 46. The Assembly then adjourned.

#### TRADES DISPUTES BILL.

On the 21ST SEPTEMBER Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra presented the report of the Public Accounts Committee on the accounts of 1926-27.

Mr. McWatters then moved that the Trades Disputes Bill be circulated for eliciting public opinion. He said that the progress of Government legislation made it impossible to take the Bill through all the stages during this session. He explained briefly the history of this legislation and emphasised that Government desired to mobilise public and press opinions to prevent industrial disputes.

In the case of services affecting the safety and welfare of India the Bill provided sufficient time to come to a settlement before a strike was declared. The community, said Mr. McWatters, must be protected against a general strike by declaring it illegal. This provision was equally in the interests of the workers.

Mr. McWatters mentioned that picketing was not mentioned in the Bill for the reason that picketing as such was not unlawful. When picketing became intimidation, it was punishable under the ordinary law.

Mr. McWatters hoped that the Bill now going for circulation would receive dispassionate consideration and come back with a large measure of support.

Mr. COCKE regretted that it was not found possible to pass this Bill this session, as both the Bombay Chamber and the Indian Chamber of Commerce had pressed Government to publish the Bill in anticipation of its passage this session. Mr. Cocke said that commercial opinion had now veered round, and admitted that Government had the right to intervene in trade disputes, and set up a conciliation board or a court of inquiry. He hoped that when opinions were received, Government would bring forward the Bill next session.

Mr. Joshi did not object to the constitution of a court of inquiry and a conciliation board, but opposed strongly the provision which proposed penalisation of the labourer who left a utility service without giving notice. There was, in that case, no reason why an employer should not be penalised for dismissing an employee. The Bill was framed "in the interests of capitalists only." Mr. Joshi was of opinion that the Bill was superfluous as there were already several acts which provided penalties for employees for leaving work without giving notice. Concluding, Mr. Joshi said that he did not see any reason for holding that a general strike was illegal. This Bill would give power to Government to characterise any big strike as illegal.

Mr. Govin JONES said that similar legislation in other countries had proved very useful. He suggested that the Bill should follow the British Act, which provided that the Minister could take action on the representation of one of the parties. By the consent of both parties the Minister could refer the matter for settlement to an industrial court, or refer the matter, for settlement by arbitration, to one more persons appointed by him, or refer the matter for settlement to a conciliation board by mutual consent of both parties.

Mr. McWatters, replying, said that the points raised were meant for consideration by the select committee, but he assured Mr. Sessa Iyengar and Colonel Gidney that the Bill would be brought prominently to the notice of labour unions and the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Associations.

The House agreed to the Bill being circulated.

#### Scheme for Separation of Audit from Ry. Accounts.

Mr. PARSONS moved the grant of Rs. 12,000 in respect of audit.

He explained that this was required for the initial outlay in the current year on expending and making permanent the separation of audit from the State railway accounts. He declared that the scheme was suggested by the Acworth Committee, and approved by a financier of international repute, Sir Arthur Dickenson and that it would lead to growing economy. The Auditor-General had approved the scheme.

Mr. Parsons also said that the proposal before the House involved making the Clearing Accounts Office permanent. He had already promised the Standing Committee an inquiry regarding the establishment in the office, but as regards the charge that the apportionment of foreign traffic receipts, during the time the Clearing Accounts Office had been in existence, was more inaccurate. Mr. Parsons showed that, in 1927-28, that office dealt with transactions amounting to Rs. 18 crores, but the irregularities were not at all of a serious nature.

Mr. NEOGY, opposing the grant, challenged the procedure adopted by Mr. Parsons. Previously the House was asked to commit to the principle by a regular resolution outlying the policy but now only a supplementary grant was put forward. A healthy precedent should not be given up. Then again, such an important matter was raised not only about the end of the session, but at the end of the day.

Mr. Parsons, he said, had not quite succeeded in persuading that old hard-headed gentleman, Sir Frederick Gauntlett, Auditor-General; for Sir Frederick Gauntlett's language was one of caution. The Auditor-General had

said that he wanted more time to consider the matter, and that he had not been able to verify the figures.

Continuing, Mr. Neogy explained that at present two systems were in force: one on the company-managed railways where the audit was merely in the nature of a post-mortem examination; the other on the State-managed railways, where pre-audit existed. It was now proposed to abolish the system in vogue on the State railways, and to adopt the system on the company-managed railways. For doing this the Assembly wanted sufficient material to be convinced of the desirability of the change. Mr. Neogy quoted the opinion expressed by the Auditor-General before the Public Accounts Committee on the system of separation on the E. I. Railway.

The President suggested that as the matter was important, the debate be continued on Monday. The House agreed and then adjourned.

#### HOME MEMBER'S APOLOGY.

On the 22ND SEPTEMBER Mr. J. Crerar (Leader of the Assembly) made the following statement in the House when it met:—

"Mr. President, I should like, with your permission, to make a further statement on the matter which occupied the attention of this House last week and which has since continued to be of the deepest concern to the Government and the whole House.

"The discussion which took place on Friday, September 14, on the question raised by the Leader of the Opposition regarding comments made in the Press or elsewhere about the President of the Assembly, has not, by common consent, resulted in clearing up the situation, which we all deplore.

"In what I have to say my earnest desire, and the desire of the Government is to do what they can to place the relations between the Chair, the House and the Government on a basis of mutual confidence and understanding, which we all agree should subsist. And with this object I find it my duty to restate the position of the Government in the matter and myself as Leader of the House.

"Government are not less jealous of the dignity of the Chair than any other section of the House, and regard themselves, along with all other hon'ble members, bound to protect the Chair in the discharge of the duties imposed upon it.

"Government have never had any reason on any occasion to question the strict impartiality of the rulings that you, Sir, have given from time to time or of your conduct in the Chair, and they have asked me to express their full confidence in the Chair.

"It follows that we must deplore and condemn, in common with the honourable members sitting opposite, all allegations or comments in the Press or elsewhere that may appear directly or indirectly to reflect adversely upon the impartiality of the Chair. It, therefore, also follows that in any action you, Sir, may think right to take to vindicate the authority of the Chair in the matter of the reflections which were the subject of the recent discussion in the House, or of any that may be made hereafter, you will have the full support of the Government.

"I state this explicitly to remove any misunderstanding that may have been caused by my previous statement on this subject. I must frankly admit that the question having been raised quite unexpectedly, I spoke in less considered terms than I would have wished and without due deliberation. I have now stated above the considered view of the Government and express my regret that my previous statement did not correctly convey it.

"The House also had its attention drawn to allegations of a campaign instigated by the Government against the Chair. I would ask the House to take it from me that there is no foundation for such a charge, which could hardly have been made except in an atmosphere clouded with suspicion.

"I have also been assured that certain official members of the House have used expressions impugning the conduct of the President and for this I, as Leader of the House, express my full regret and theirs, and would assure both the President and the House that, so far as the Government can, they will take steps to ensure that there will be no recurrence of such expression.

"On the question of the relations between the Government and the President of the Assembly, I would only ask leave to say one thing more. If at any time—and I make the supposition only to avoid any possible ambiguity—circumstances had arisen in which the Government had been unable to feel that confidence in the impartiality of the Chair, which is necessary for the due discharge in this House of the functions both of the Chair and of the Government, it would at once have adopted the only possible and straightforward course of informing the President and bringing the matter before this House.

"I desire, in conclusion, to repeat and emphasise that the Government is on all grounds certainly not less concerned, and in some respects perhaps even more deeply concerned, than any other section of the House in the prestige, the dignity and the authority of the Chair.

"I am grateful to you, Sir, for affording me this opportunity of making my own position and that of the Government plain.

"It is the earnest desire of myself as of those for whom I speak, that whatever from time to time may be our political disagreements, we may all unite to invest this House with an honourable tradition in the conduct of its affairs, and see that by lending our assistance to the Chair, which is the natural guardian of all the interests in the House, this tradition is constantly maintained."

Pandit Motilal NEHRU (Leader of the Opposition) followed Mr. Crerar. He said: "I congratulate the Hon. the Home Member on making the statement he has just now made. It was conceived in a spirit of absolute fairness to all concerned.

"I take it to be a complete vindication of the honour and dignity of the Chair and of this House against unworthy attacks and reflections from whatever quarter such attacks and reflections might have emanated.

"On behalf of this side of the House, I fully associate myself with the Home Member in his unqualified condemnation of the baseless aspersions cast upon the Chair and this House by the press, for which we know that the correspondents of the 'Times of India,' the 'Daily Telegraph,' and the 'Morning Post' are responsible. I have no doubt you will take such action against them as you consider proper.

"I am equally sure that the House will welcome the further assurance that the Government is not less jealous of the dignity of the Chair than any other section of this House, and I hope and trust that all sections of the House, whatever their differences may be on other points will always combine to uphold its dignity to the best of their ability.

"The frank expression of regret by the Home Member at the conduct of certain official members of the House who permitted themselves to impugn the impartiality of the Chair will, I have no doubt, be deeply appreciated by the House. The assurances given by the Home Member and the good sense of the official members themselves will, I am confident, avoid a recurrence.

"I hope, Sir, after the statement made by the Home Member to-day the misunderstanding caused by his previous statement will be removed and that you and the House will accept his regret for having made that statement.

"In these circumstances, so far as the Government and the official members of the House are concerned, the matter will, I trust, be treated as a closed chapter.

"In conclusion, I desire to convey to you, Sir, of our abiding faith in the integrity and impartiality of the Chair.

"Your rulings have as often been against us as in our favour but I can confidently assert that there is not one member on this side of the House who has ever doubted that they were prompted by anything other than strict fairness.

"It is, indeed, a matter for pride to us to find that in our first Indian elected President of the House we have one who by common consent would do honour to the Speaker's Chair in any legislature of the world.

"Permit me, Sir, to convey to you the assurance from this side of the House, that we have the fullest confidence in the Chair and that it will always be our duty and privilege to protect its honour and dignity."

Lala LAJPATRAI (Nationalist Party) associated himself with the sentiments expressed by Pandit Motilal Nehru.



He felt confident that the whole country would receive Mr. Crerar's statement with satisfaction. He also shared the assurance of the Home Member that every section of the Assembly was satisfied with the impartiality, integrity and ability of the Chair.

"In future," Lala Lajpatrai continued, "all sections of the House would be jealous of the reputation both of the Chair and of the Government. The latter deserved congratulations upon Mr. Crerar's statement and the relations between all parts of the House would be more pleasant than ever before."

Sir Purshottamdas THAKURDAS (Independent Party) felt glad that the Government had risen up to Parliamentary traditions and shown that great solicitude for the prestige and dignity of the House and the Chair and Mr. Crerar's statement was worthy of the Government he represented.

It was satisfactory that the session which had commenced with so much estrangement of feeling between the different sections of the House was about to close in a complete understanding. The Independent Party, continued the speaker, had nothing but the highest admiration for the conduct of the Chair.

Mr. COCKE (European Group) congratulating the Government on their statement affirmed that no party upheld the dignity of the Chair more strongly than his, which would not allow itself to be deflected from its course. Although the rulings of the Chair might be a subject of comment on technical grounds, no member was justified in imputing partiality or wrong motives to the Chair, unless he was prepared to bring up the matter on the floor of the House.

Sir Zulfikarali KHAN (Central Moslems Party) associated himself with the sentiments expressed. He congratulated the Government on having given adequate expression to their views and thereby enabled the storm which involved them all to pass away. The President was the symbol of the dignity, honour and authority of the House and the Central Moslems Party would do everything to uphold them.

The President, rising amidst cheers, wanted time to consider the statement made by Mr. Crerar and the speeches made, and promised to express his views on Monday. Meanwhile, he congratulated the Home Member on his statement.

### Separation of Assembly Office.

Pandit Motilal NEHRU then moved the following resolution on the separation question :—

This House is strongly of the opinion that

(A) A separate department be constituted not later than December 1st 1928 ;  
(B) The Government of India should take immediate steps to secure the sanction of the Secretary of State to that part of the scheme which requires his sanction ;

(C) The scheme submitted by the President as amended by the Government of India be modified so as to prove :—

(1) That the Assembly department shall be included in the portfolio of the Governor-General in consultation with the President ;

(2) That the principal officers appointed shall be liable to dismissal by the Governor-General in consultation with the President, and other disciplinary action against these officers shall be vested in the hands of the President, subject to the right of appeal to the Governor-General ;

(3) That other members of the establishment be appointed by the President in consultation with the Secretary ;

(4) That these other members shall be liable to be dismissed or otherwise punished by the President in consultation with the Secretary subject to the right of appeal to the Governor-General ;

(5) That questions of expenditure be dealt with in the ordinary way, but in the case of a difference of opinion over any items of expenditure between the President and the Government of India there shall be a reference to the Governor-General and his decision shall be final.

The House further requests the President to recommunicate its opinion to the Governor-General for necessary action.

Pandit Motilal referred to Mr. Neogy's question in the Assembly in 1924, and the correspondence which followed between the President and the Government on the scheme prepared by the President, and the despatch which was the result thereof. The recent party leaders' Conference convened as the result of the President's suggestion could not come to an agreement at the first meeting, but it re-met, and the result was embodied in his motion, which he declared, in some instances, did not represent the views of the President, and in others did represent the unanimous view of party leaders. Pandit Motilal further explained the features agreed upon in the scheme, and commended it as a good beginning.

Mr. CRERAR said that the Government had fully realised the strength of the feeling in the House on the subject and had therefore allotted a day for the discussion of the subject. The Government's view was embodied in the despatch to the Secretary of State already laid on the table of the House.

They had fully accepted the principle of separation and they had no further observations to make. He assured the Leader of the Opposition, regarding the passage quoted from the despatch about the position of a Government majority in the House, that no insinuation whatever had been either intended or implied.

Proceeding Mr. Crerar said that he hoped the House realised that the Government had taken an unusual course in publishing the despatch in reference to the strong opinion expressed in the House. When the despatch was written it was not thought that it would be the subject of a discussion in the House at this stage.

In asking, therefore, the Secretary of State to sanction this unusual course, Government had evinced their sincere desire to give the House the earliest opportunity to discuss the whole matter fully. The proposals of the Government were now before the Secretary of State, who had agreed to postpone his conclusions till the results of this debate in the House were available to him. He would recognise that, while the Secretary of State's financial sanction was required in any case in respect of the new posts to be created, the whole scheme was one of very great administrative importance.

Finally, Mr. Crerar assured the House that the opinions expressed in the course of the debate would be given a most careful consideration by the Government, who would communicate them to the Secretary of State with as much despatch as possible.

Lala Lajpat RAI congratulated the Government on having placed the despatch before the House. He explained that Pandit Motilal's resolutions contained conclusions arrived at unanimously between the party leaders. These were different both from the views to be found in the President's scheme and the Government despatch. He then proceeded to explain the difference.

Firstly, the resolution upheld the point of view of the President against that of the Government that the Assembly office should be within the Governor-General's portfolio.

Secondly, while the President wished the officials of the Assembly office to be appointed by the Governor-General on his recommendation, the resolution provided that these be appointed in consultation with the President.

Mr. H. G. COCKE said that the matter was of extreme satisfaction. There was complete agreement on all sides of the House as was exhibited that afternoon. He hoped that, in spite of difference of opinion, there would always be a harmonious feeling between the different parts of the House. He felt sure that the Assembly received the fullest assistance from Messrs. Graham and Wright. He supported the principle underlying the separation scheme.

He, however, maintained that all appointments in the Assembly Secretariat should be made by the Public Services Commission, and fully endorsed the view that the Assembly portfolio should be in charge of the Viceroy.

Motion Adopted.

The President put the motion, which was adopted.

Mr. Crerar stated that the Public Safety Bill would be considered in the light of the Select Committee's report. He informed the Chair that he would request him to waive the Standing Orders in this connection to enable the Bill to be taken up before seven days. The Assembly then adjourned.

## THE PRESIDENT ACCEPTS APOLOGY.

On the 24TH SEPTEMBER Mr. Patel, the President, made the following statement.

"I frankly confess that I was not prepared for the speeches that I heard on Saturday last from the leaders of the various parties, and they came upon me as an agreeable surprise.

"I was indeed so touched by those speeches, that, for the moment, I found myself unable to find words to express my thoughts. For this human weakness in your President I make an humble apology to the House. When I was hearing those speeches I was reminded of the scene on January 20, 1927, on the occasion of my unanimous re-election to this Chair.

"I am sincerely grateful to the House, to every section and every member thereof, for their generosity and large-heartedness for overlooking my many shortcomings and for once again expressing their unanimous confidence in me. I am conscious of my weaknesses and my failing, and I desire to assure you that I shall make every endeavour to justify to some extent the confidence you have been pleased to repose in me.

"I know that it is very difficult for the President to appear impartial on all occasions and to all sections of the House. I have often aroused feelings of resentment or soreness among members whose conduct I sometimes felt it my duty strongly to disapprove, or who were placed at a disadvantage in carrying out their party engagements by my rulings. But it is a matter of sincere gratification to me to find that that feeling has been but brief and transient and, when those speeches were being made on Saturday last, I was wondering within myself whether I had really impressed the House generally with a belief in the impartiality of my rulings and with a conviction that my one concern was to discharge my duties as guardian of the House and that I had not intentionally lent myself to be an instrument in the hands of official leaders in the House.

"I now come to the statement of the Hon. the Home Member. His previous statement adopting on behalf of the Government an attitude of complete detachment at the attacks in the Press and elsewhere on the President of the Assembly, had come as a painful surprise from one in his responsible position, and was the subject of strong comment by several members; but, the readiness with which on Saturday, he hastened to put matters right must raise the Hon. Member in the estimation of everyone who heard his fresh statement or would read it.

"I congratulate him and also the Government, on whose behalf that statement was made.

"May I be allowed at this stage to say a word in reference to the attitude of certain official members which has recently been the subject matter of a good deal of comment?

"In the heat of party feeling, when men's passions are aroused, I can understand words escaping the honourable gentlemen or their doing something which in their cooler moments they themselves would regret.

"I take it that the words of the Hon. members referred to in the statement of the Leader of the House were not premeditated or deliberate. I desire to assure the Hon. member that it has been, and will be, my constant endeavour in the Chair to allay feelings of party bitterness as much as I can and to prevent undue excitement and passion in the House. I shall say no more on this occasion because it is my earnest wish to eradicate all personal feelings that has unfortunately found its way recently into this Chamber.

"I will only add that I shall always be content to leave my conduct in the Chair to the judgment of this House and of every fair, impartial and honourable man outside it.

"With that end in view I accept, without any reservation, the expression of regret made by the Leader of the House, on behalf of himself and the officials concerned, in the same generous spirit in which it has been made, and appeal to every member of the House to forget the incidents which have been responsible for the atmosphere of distrust and suspicion calculated to lower the dignity and prestige of this House, which must be the primary concern of every Hon. member.

"In these circumstances, and in accordance with the general wish of the House, expressed in no uncertain terms on Saturday last, I propose to say nothing more.

"This statement thus disposes of the part of the case in which I promised to make an inquiry and give my conclusions, leaving the other part, regarding the conduct of the two Press correspondents, untouched. I once again thank the Hon. members for their confidence in me."

## The Public Safety Bill.

After Mr. Patel's statement which was loudly cheered, Mr. Crerar was called upon to move that the Public Safety Bill, as amended by the Select Committee, be taken into consideration.

Mr. VIDAYASAGAR PANDYA raised a point of order objecting to the motion as a week's notice had not been given.

Mr. CRERAR replied that it was the general wish of the House that the Bill should be proceeded with and appealed to the Chair to suspend the standing order.

The President asked those who backed Mr. Pandya's objection to stand and as only four rose he suspended the ruling.

Mr. CRERAR pointed out that the principle of the Bill was already approved of by the House. The Committee had subjected the measure to a strict and severe scrutiny and had provided safeguards in order to meet the objections advanced during the debate. Explaining the improvements Mr. Crerar referred to the exemption from its operation of those European British subjects who had been resident in India for a considerable period of time or had a stake or business in the country. Another substantial safeguard was the provision giving all accused persons the right of appeal before a Tribunal of three Session Judges whose decision would be final. These could not be High Court Judges for it was necessary for High Court Judges that their complete impartiality and detachment from all matters which had a political complexion, should be sedulously preserved.

Five years had been fixed as the life of the Bill in the first instance. Though he did not agree that this period was enough to see the dangers of Communism disappear, yet it was a substantial period. After this period the Government, if it felt necessary, would ask the Legislature to confer on the Executive these or similar powers. The Bill was one which required the co-operation and assistance of every private citizen not only from the point of view of his own self-interest but from a sense of public duty.

The obligations and responsibilities of the Legislature far transcended those of the private citizen and the Government were entitled to look to this House not only for its legislative sanction but moral support. He had gone as far as he could in improving the Bill and now asked the House to discharge its duty.

Mr. DORAISWAMI IYENGAR said that his first thought was to support the Bill with a view to exposing the methods of the Government of India in the eyes of the world, but a higher instinct prevailed—to protect the liberty of foreigners. He looked to the Bill to find provision to penalise Communists who promoted religious disturbances. The new Bill in fact was much worse than the original for the story would now accompany the accused that he had a fair trial.

He believed that Session Judges were impartial where the matter did not affect the Government and was sorry to find Sir H. S. Gour who was quoted as an authority on Criminal Law deteriorate to the position taken by him on the Select Committee.

Mr. PRAKASAM asked why there was this fear of Communism. It did not advocate murder and violence.

Sir Victor Sassoon : "It does."

Mr. Prakasam : "In that way there are murderers among lawyers and merchants. 'I am a Communist (Sir Victor : 'A Red of the Third International')' I challenge you to show me a Communist organisation advocating violence and murder."

Sir H. S. Gour : "Show me one which doesn't".

Mr. Prakasam : "I am sorry for the ignorance of the Hon. Member. There is something wrong with him. I will oppose any attempt to overthrow organized Government. But is this Government organized which deported the Maharaja of Nabha without the use of the regulation which kept under three years' detention a member of this House?"

Mr. Srinivasa IYENGAR critically examined the Bill. He said that the provision providing for a reference to the High Court, if the accused held that he did not come within the provisions of the Bill, was superfluous as this right was already enjoyed. As regards the Judicial Tribunal, the speaker maintained that a man could not get impartiality in political matters from Sessions Judges but his demand was that the inquiry must be judicial while the provision in the Bill in this respect was mere "eyewash".

Indeed, the Bill would be an instrument of monstrous oppression for it would penalise movements intending directly or indirectly to subvert organised Government and all forms of law. The speaker held that the Government, on the pretext of preventing agrarian and industrial disputes, really wished to thwart any movements to bring about agricultural reform and industrial progress.

The Bill was really intended for all kinds of reform movements and suggested that the Government might have, in a sentence, summed up its intention as putting down Communism and the Eswaraj Party doctrine. There was nothing wrong in Bolshevik ideas. Why should the Governor-General-in-Council have the world's odium exercising these summary powers? Why not let the Courts of justice function?

Sir Victor SASSOON, in a well-received speech, exhorted the House to support the amended Bill. He did not appeal to those who still lulled themselves to sleep in the belief that Bolshevism and Red Communism could never strike root in India but to those who had not given their judgment into the hands of party Whips.

He described the amended Bill as "by no means bad" but a reasonable Bill providing sufficient safeguards to render it innocuous to those whom it was not intended to touch. He admitted that there was force in the argument of Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar about Sessions Judges but asked the House to consider the measure as a whole and especially the object behind it. The amended Bill had excluded from its operation those European British subjects whose existence was interwoven with the economic life of the country even if they became converts to the ghastly doctrine of Bolshevism. The Bill would, therefore, only affect casual visitors to whom it would mean an inconvenience at not being able to see the sights of India.

"He may not have the pleasure," he stated, "of enjoying the Taj Mahal by moonlight but there is nothing to prevent him from going further and enjoying the ruins of Ankor in Cambodia, to study conditions in China, to visit the Temple of Heaven in Peking and pass on to the most picturesque of countries—" (Japan.)

Why should the Swarajists, he asked, think that they could not achieve Swaraj without the help of foreigners. Where they so devoid of brilliant intellects?

The object of the Bill was to delay the development of the Red menace in India. It was therefore a vital matter to have some legislation. If they passed the Bill they would be creating a precedent in the fact that the elected representatives of the people were prepared, for the sake of their country, to sink all party feelings to support what they called irresponsible Government and not merely for singing the slogan—"We have defeated the Government once more."

Mr. KELKAR opposing the motion contended that its scope in trial was vague and useless. Government had confirmed its craving for repressive Legislation and had run mad by closing its eyes while seeking to complete its defence. The speaker asked why England should not herself deal with undesirable English Communists instead of the English Government in India trying to do so. Socialism had been accepted as not dangerous and the real truth was that Capitalism was in danger and hence the Government were prepared to kill Communism. The Bill was against India's sense of hospitality. They were not to uphold Imperialism but pledged to wreck it and replace it by an Indian Commonwealth.

Colonel CRAWFORD said that he had personal experience of Russia as he served in the Army in Russia and was Food Controller in Baku in 1918. He found the Bolshevik leaders admirable men but dangerous fanatics, with their ideals of bringing about equality among men and nationalising women. The Bolsheviks realised that they could not make a success of their ideal of setting up a new world without destroying the old world and civilization. (Voice: "No! No!")

Colonel Crawford assured the House that the information on which Government action was based was not unreliable. When the news first came it was treated as a piece of interesting news and only when it was confirmed by information emanating from a source entirely unconnected with the previous source, was it taken as a fact. They could trust a Session Judge's tribunal and make sure that the Executive were acting rightly.

Colonel Crawford thought that Mr. Joshi opposed the Bill only because his sources of money from outside would dry up otherwise. (A voice: "Absurd.") He joined issue with Sir Parehottamdas in urging the Government to deal with the whole menace and handle the Indian Communists as well but felt that the Government's failure to do this should be no reason for not accepting half the loaf.

Mr. ORERAB told Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar that the Bill did not penalise ideas or ideals at all but was intended to prevent Communistic ideals and ideas coming into active operation since the Communists had clearly expressed their determination to destroy the bourgeoisie and set up the proletariat. The Bill was not a complete panacea for the evil mentioned, but proposed to deal with certain aspects of the evil, which were imminent. He asked the House to consider the motion in a severely practical spirit.

#### Motion Defeated.

The motion for the consideration of the Bill as amended by the Select Committee was put to the vote and the House divided.

When the division papers were being checked, Sir James Simpson, who had been locked out at division time, entered the Chamber by the President's door, for which he was administered a sharp rebuke by the Chair.

It was found that 61 votes were cast for the Bill and 61 against. The President in giving his casting vote against the motion said :

"If any individual member seeks to place such an extraordinary measure on the statute book he must convince the House and get a majority in his favour. (Cheers on the non-official benches). The Home Member has failed to secure a clear majority in his favour and cannot expect the Chair to give his casting vote in favour of the motion for consideration."

He, thereupon, declared the motion defeated by 61 against 62. Loud shouts of "Bande Mataram" rang forth from the Swarajist and Nationalist benches and the President adjourned the House.

On the 25TH SEPTEMBER, when the Assembly met, the news had spread that the Government had decided to accept, for the present, the Assembly's verdict and not to proceed with the Public Safety in Bill this session.

Sir James Simpson apologised for yesterday's incident for which he had already received a rebuke from the Chair. Sir James said that being a new member of the House, he was not fully conversant with its etiquette and rules. Since the incident he had learnt that by entering the House from behind the Chair he had committed a serious breach of Parliamentary etiquette. He therefore expressed his sincere regret and apologised to the Chair and the House.

Mr. Webb, Chief Official Whip, explained the circumstances which led to the incident. He said that rumours had gone abroad that he had brought Sir James through the President's door. This was absolutely incorrect. He was in his seat when Sir James came. He thought Sir James could go and vote but soon realised that he was wrong and asked him not to vote.

Mr. Crerar on behalf of the Government expressed his regret and said that it would be deplored by the members concerned.

The President said that this session was somehow full of a series of deplorable incidents. He sympathised with Sir James who was not only unable to vote for his constituency but very nearly incurred the displeasure of the Chair and the House. Considering the fact, however, that he was new to the House and not fully conversant with Parliamentary etiquette and rules, Mr. Patel hoped the House would accept his apology.

Sir James had come to him this morning and expressed his regret for having entered the House by the President's door. The President hoped the House would forget the incident.

After Sir James Simpson's apology had been accepted the House proceeded to elect its members to the Standing Committee for the Commerce Department and also to a Committee on the separation of railway finances from general finances.

The motion was put to vote and carried by a majority.

#### Official Bills.

On the motion of Mr. McWatters a Bill amending the Indian Patents and Designs Act of 1911 was circulated for eliciting opinion. The next motion on the agenda was Sir Denys Bray's Bill to amend the Penal Code (the Press Bill.)

Mr Crerar regretted that Sir Denys Bray was not in a position to be present. The President asked Mr. Crerar what the intention of the Government was regarding this Bill.

Mr. Crerar said that the Government's intention was to hold it up till next February.

On the motion of Mr. Shilidey the Assembly agreed to the amendments made by the Council of State to the Indian Succession Bill. The House proceeded further to consider a motion of Mr. Parsons regarding the separation of the railway audit from railway accounts.

#### Railway Audit and Accounts.

Discussion was resumed on Mr. Parsons' motion for a supplementary grant of Rs. 12,000 to cover the initial outlay on the scheme of separation of audit from accounts and making the Clearing Accounts Office permanent.

Mr. Neogy pointed out that economy had been shown because it was intended to pay the accounts service a lower scale of salaries.

Mr. Parsons might say to-day, "I am the Railway Board," (laughter) but the House must ask for further evidence before agreeing to the scheme. Therefore he urged the present experiment to continue for another three years.

Mr. Ranga Iyer admitted that he opposed the scheme of separation four years ago but would support it now. He said that consistency was the virtue of an ass. (Laughter).

Mr. Abdul Matin Chaudhury wanted the Moslem members to refuse all grants under the Railway Board so long as communal representation was not secured.

The President ruled the remarks out of order as only the merit of a question could be discussed during debates on supplementary grants.

Mr. Jamnadas Mehta expressed surprise that the Assembly was asked to sanction the necessary money on a proposal the principle of which had not been accepted by it. He expected that the question would be brought up in the form of a resolution and considered the present device as most irregular. If the House sanctioned the grant it would automatically perpetuate the clearing house office. If the Railways were to be run on business lines he said it was essential to separate audit from accounts.

Pandit Hirdayanath Kunzru stated that all rules and regulations governing the separation scheme should be placed before the Standing Finance Committee and not a single appointment should be made till then, because the railway accounts service had been manned in the past in a manner which gave utter dissatisfaction to the Assembly. The claims of Indians should be considered.

Mr. Pareons replying regretted that it had not occurred to him that the matter should have been brought up before the Assembly in the form of a resolution and not in the form of a supplementary demand. The Railway Board was extremely anxious that audit should be independent of accounts. He assured the house that the Government's policy of minority representation would be observed.

The motion was put to the House and carried by a majority.

### Criticisms of Tour in Provinces.

Mr. V. J. Patel, President, before adjourning the House *sine die*, made two promised statements. He said:—

"In pursuance of a promise I made the other day, I propose to make a statement in connection with a large number of interpellations from some hon. members questioning the propriety of certain criticisms and attacks against the President of the Assembly, which had appeared in a certain newspaper some days back, in commenting upon his recent visits to some of the Provincial Councils. I had also received notice of a motion from Mr. B Das, asking this House to place on record its severest condemnation of those attacks.

#### Inherent Right.

"I have recently expressed the view that it is the inherent right of the Assembly to condemn by a specific motion any attack made against itself or its President. At the same time, I am clearly of opinion that such a procedure should not be resorted to except under very exceptional circumstances, and I would appeal to the House, particularly in the light of what has happened since I received these notices, to leave the matter there and not to pursue it any further.

"The House will also permit me in this connection to draw its attention to a matter of procedure in regard to notices and interpellations addressed to the President. It is a well established rule of practice in the House of Commons that questions may be publicly addressed to the Speaker regarding matters of procedure and privileges of the House; but it is not permissible to give notices of such inquiries, and have them printed on the notice paper in the same manner as questions addressed to Ministers. My predecessor had followed that rule, and I propose to do the same.

#### Dignity of The Chair.

"It goes without saying that to require the Chair to answer questions and enter into a controversy, is wholly incompatible with the decorum of the proceedings of this House and derogatory to the dignity of the Chair. Such a procedure must, therefore, be discouraged and deprecated.

"May I take this opportunity of explaining to the House the actual events and the exact position in regard to the visits of the President of the Assembly to the Provincial Councils? This practice has not been started by me. The House is fully aware that it has been in vogue since the inception of the present Reforms, and that it was not initiated at the instance, or on the suggestion of the President himself.

#### "Guide and Adviser."

"In recommending the appointment of the first President, the Joint Parliamentary Committee which dealt with the Reform Bill of 1919, observed that he should be the guide and adviser of the Presidents of the Provincial Councils and he should be chosen with a view to the influence which, it is hoped, he would have on the whole history of parliamentary procedure in India.

"To attain this end, very soon after his appointment as the President of the Assembly, my hon. predecessor Sir Frederick Whyte, undertook a tour visiting several Provinces in July and August, 1921. It will interest the House to know in his own words the reason why he undertook that tour.

"In reply to a question tabled by Mr. S. C. Ghose, regarding the annual Conferences of the Presidents of the legislative bodies, Sir Frederick Whyte replied on February, 3, 1925, as follows :—

"After His Excellency the Viceroy (then Lord Chelmsford) appointed me to be the President of the Legislative Assembly, the then Secretary of State (Mr. Montague) discussed informally with me the scope of my work as President. In the course of our conversation, he said that he thought it would be advisable for the President of the Legislative Assembly to establish friendly relations with his brother Presidents in the Provinces.

"A few months later, after resuming charge of my present office, I went on tour, visiting three Provinces in July and August 1921. I am glad to be able to inform the Assembly that I met with a most cordial reception, and partly as a result of conversations which I then had with my colleagues in those three Provinces, and partly as the result of correspondence with the Presidents in other Provinces, I was encouraged to issue an invitation to all the Presidents to assemble in conference at Simla, in September 1921.

#### Previous Sanction,

"It will thus be seen that, apart from the recommendation of the Joint Committee to which I have already made reference, the practice inaugurated by Sir Frederick Whyte, my predecessor, of visiting the Provincial Councils had the sanction of no less an authority than that of Mr. Montague, who initiated and carried through the Reforms Act under which the present Central and Provincial Legislatures of India have been constituted.

"The necessity of close co-operation between the President of the Assembly and the Presidents of the Provincial Councils, and of co-ordination in the methods of work, and in the practice and Procedure of the Legislature, has been repeatedly emphasised at the Annual Conference held not only during the time of Sir Frederick Whyte, but also during my term of office in 1925.

#### Lord Reading's View.

"After my election to this Chair, I inquired of His Excellency Lord Reading (the then Viceroy) whether the practice followed by Sir Frederick Whyte of visiting the Provincial Councils, and having Annual Conferences with the Presidents of their Councils, should be continued by me, who was an elected President, and not an appointed President with parliamentary experience.

"In reply, I was informed that His Excellency was of opinion that the change from appointed to elected President had not affected the position, and that it was desirable that the elected President of the Legislative Assembly should maintain the same relations with the elected Presidents of the Local Legislative Councils, as were maintained by his predecessors with the appointed Presidents of their Councils.

#### Unanimous Opinion.

"When the Annual Conference of Presidents was held in January, 1926, the Provincial Presidents who attended it placed on record their unanimous opinion in the following terms :—

"All the Provincial Presidents asked the President of the Legislative Assembly to place on record their unanimous opinion that the purpose of these Conferences could be more effectively carried out if the President of the Legislative Assembly visited the Provinces from time to time for discussing with each Provincial President the difficulties and intricacies arising in the procedure, and for attending the meeting of the Provincial councils."

"I think I have said enough to enable the House to know why the practice of the visits of the President, of the Legislative Assembly to the Provincial Councils was started and has been continued, and to realise that these visits of the President of the Assembly to the Provinces are wholly in the public interest, and have been undertaken in the discharge of his public duties."

#### Press and Chair's Dignity.

Dealing with the charges of partiality attributed to the Chair, Mr. Patel said :—

"At the meeting of September 14, Pandit Motilal Nehru, the leader of the Opposition, had drawn my attention to certain criticisms against the President of the Assembly contained in the report of the correspondent of the "Times of India" in its issue of September 8, and also in the message of the Simla Correspondent of the "Daily Telegraph," published in that paper, and telegraphed to this country by the Free Press.



"It was contended by the Leader of the Opposition that criticisms in the report of the "Times of India" correspondent contained a suggestion that the President of this Assembly had done a good deal of publicity in preparation for the discussion of the question of the institution of a separate Assembly Secretariat, and with a view to prejudice the Government position. They also contained a charge of partiality against the President in giving his ruling against the Government in connection with the Public Safety Bill on September 6, 1928.

"I have carefully examined these criticisms, and I am satisfied that the contention of the leader of the Opposition is substantially correct. The writer has cleverly avoided making a direct suggestion or charge, but failed in his attempt to conceal his real motive. Such veiled insinuations and suggestions are, in my opinion, more reprehensible than direct charges.

"The message of the Simla correspondent of the "Daily Telegraph" speaks for itself and needs no comments. It contains a direct charge of partiality against the President, and the writer has made no attempt to conceal his intentions. During the debate, no member had a word to say in justification or defence of the criticisms, and the fresh statement made by the Home Member on September, 22 left no room for doubt that the whole House strongly disapproved and condemned those criticisms, and assured the President that he will have its support in any action that he might think fit to take against the correspondents concerned.

"Speaking for myself, I am always very unwilling to take any disciplinary measure against the Press men, and, therefore, have delayed passing any orders in this case so long in the hope that the correspondents concerned might see their way to tender to the Chair and the House their unqualified apology. Not only has no apology come, but one of the correspondents added insult to injury by writing to me that his comments were based on the remarks made by members of several parties in the House, as if that was any justification for the comments he made, even if true.

#### Support of Press.

"I fully appreciate and recognise the general support I have received from the Press in India in the discharge of my difficult duties, and if I take any action in this case, it is because I am driven to it by the correspondents themselves. I wish they had taken note of the universal condemnation in the House of their conduct and had made amends.

"In these circumstances, I hereby direct that, with effect from the date of the adjournment of the House "sine die," the Press passes granted to Mr. Byrt and Mr. Rice shall stand cancelled, and no notice papers, bills, etc., shall be sent to them until further directions from the President.

"I would add that the correspondents concerned, or their papers, are eligible to renew their applications, and they will be considered by the President if, in the meanwhile, a full, frank and unqualified apology to the Chair and the House is forthcoming in terms approved by the President, and published in such newspapers and in such manner as he might approve."

The Assembly then adjourned 'sine die'.

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# The Council of State.

The autumn session of the Council of State commenced at Simla on the 11th SEPTEMBER 1928, Sir Moncrieff-Smith presiding.

## Historical Survey of Lillooah Strikes.

During interpellations, Mr. Kumar Sankar Ray Choudhury asked the Government to state the cause, nature and result of the recent strike of Railway Workers at Lillooah and Howrah. He enquired what negotiations took place to bring about the settlement.

Mr. G. CORBETT detailing the historical survey of these strikes said that the alleged cause of the strike according to a statement made by the General Secretary, East Indian Railway Union, Khagaul was the discharge of four workmen from the workshops but actually men had on the 1st of March threatened to take direct action unless their wages were increased within a week and communicated this threat to the Agent through the General Secretary of the Union and it was, the Government presume, because their demands were not being acceded to in full that men downed tools on the midday of the 5th of March.

As they continued to refuse to work, the Agent announced on the 7th March that the workshops would be closed until further notice. Subsequently on the 12th of March, the Agent gave an interview to the President and General Secretary of the Union and representatives of the workmen at which, the deputation made certain demands including those previously made on the 1st of March to none of which was the Agent able to agree. Between this date and the 10th July, there were no direct negotiations between the Agent and the Union. On the 10th July, the strike collapsed and men resumed work 'en masse'.

On the 30th July, as a result of the circulation of an unfounded statement that the Agent had promised to redress the grievances within 15 days, there was a recurrence of the trouble at Lillooah, accompanied by disorderly behaviour in the shops and the Agent found it necessary to warn the men that unless they worked properly, shops would again be closed. Men thereupon decided to adopt passive resistance and the Agent closed the shops again on the evening of the 30th July.

On the 6th of August the Agent issued a notification to the workshop staff enumerating the various requests which had been made to him by the workmen in a letter of 31st of July which were almost entirely a repetition of their previous demands. He repeated the assurance already given to them that there would be no victimization and that certain men who had been dismissed at Ondal and Asansol would be re-engaged as the vacancies occurred but rejected the rest of their demands.

At the same time he announced that as a result of investigation into the pay of certain classes of the lowest paid staff in Lillooah and Calcutta workshops which he had previously undertaken to make, he proposed to grant certain increases from the 1st of August and also to institute an enquiry into the housing conditions of the workshop staff at Lillooah. He further told the men that the shops would be re-opened on August 8th and warned them that anyone returning to work and subsequently found creating a disturbance or inciting others to stop work would be immediately dismissed and that in the event of a general disturbance, he would close the shops for at least a month. He gave the men until 15th August to return to work, failing which they would be treated as having resigned and would be settled upon application. After this announcement, there was a full attendance when the shops were re-opened and there has since been no trouble or disturbance of any kind.

On the 12TH SEPTEMBER the President admitted the motion of Sir Mahomed Habibullah that in pursuance of the resolution adopted by the Council on February 22 the Council do proceed by such method as the President may direct to elect three of its members to the Central Committee to sit with the Indian Statutory Commission.

## Land Revenue.

Dr. Rama RAO moved a resolution that no revenue, tax, cess or fee, after March, 1930, be levied or continue to be levied, on land held in private ownership except under laws enacted by the local legislatures and that local Governments should introduce Bills in the local Legislatures, ensuring that their legislation be completed before the end of year 1929-30.

The speaker contended that if there was one item of revenue in British India which excited more interest, criticism and resentment than all the others put together, it was land revenue. The present system had built upon the wreckage of the systems prevalent in the old Hindu and Moslem Empire and based on doubt, confusion, misconception and misunderstanding without regard to the well-being of the agricultural population of India.

The charge was laid at the door of the Central Government that they persistently refused to accord sanction for the Land Revenue Bill which the Madras Government contemplated. Whosoever was responsible for this civil disobedience or passive resistance to the legally constituted parliamentary authority, the stern fact could not be ignored that the ryots had begun to feel the pinch of the land tax.

The rack-renting policy of the Government of India had been put to the test at Bardoli and had not succeeded. Dr. Rama Rao declared that the Central Government should, therefore, direct the provincial Governments to submit the question of the land tax to the vote of the legislature in obedience to the mandate of the Joint Parliamentary Committee and thus absolve themselves of blame in the matter.

Sir Muhammad HABIBULLAH said that neither the Provincial Governments nor the Government of India could be justifiably charged with indifference or apathy in the matter. Criticising the implications in the resolution he pointed out that Land Revenue was a Provincial reserved subject and that the Government of India could, as the law stood at present, issue no peremptory orders to the local Government prohibiting them from either levying or collecting land revenue.

It was rather carrying the point too far in asking the Government of India to instruct the local Governments not to collect or not to continue to collect any tax after 1930. Land Revenue was the main source of revenue in each Province. Scrap it and the whole administration would be brought to a standstill. Dr. Rama Rao had given one year within which the local Governments must, according to him, hasten legislation. Supposing this legislation was impossible in any Province what would be the consequence?

Already several Provincial Governments had to shelve many schemes of public utility by the Meston Award. Fortunately it had been abrogated and the Provinces were just now slowly giving effect to those schemes.

Was this the time, he asked, for the Government of India to ask the local Governments to forego big slices out of their revenue?

Indeed, this was the time when he was asking the Provincial Governments to be ready to put their hands deep into their pockets in order to give effect to the wholesome recommendations of the Linlithgow Commission. In the near future there would be an All-India Conference to determine the subject's urgency subject to programme of work according to financial possibilities.

Dr. Rama Rao knew what his (the speaker's) sympathies were with regard to land revenue administration. The utmost they could do now was to draw the attention of the local Governments to the subject and ask them to give effect to the Joint Parliamentary Committee's recommendations. This they did first in March 1920 and then again in 1923.

The replies received disclosed that with the exception of Bengal and Bihar, which were largely under permanent settlements, the local Governments of other Provinces informed them that they were contemplating action.

Bills were actually introduced in Madras, Bombay, the United Provinces, the Punjab, Assam and the Central Provinces, but the main reason why no decision was reached was that the local Governments and non-official members in the councils could not reach any agreement.

The only solution lay in a compromise and such a compromise could not be prompted from Delhi or Simla. The Government of India were again addressing the local Governments on the subject of land revenue and hoped that their initiative on this occasion might contribute a solution to these outstanding questions. Sir Muhammad Habibulla advised Dr. Rama Rao not to press the resolution.

Dr. Rama Rao finally withdrew the resolution in view of the assurance of Sir Muhammad Habibullah pointing out that his intention was to wake up sleeping dogs.

#### High Courts Reform:

Mr. Kumar Sankar Ray Choudhury urged the Government to amend the Government of India Act so as to prevent the powers and procedure of High Courts from being changed by the executive orders of His Majesty-in-Council. He stated that the power vested on His Majesty should be taken away and confined to the Indian Legislature and not in the hands of the executive. The mover quoted the Constitution of Canada and other countries in support of the motion.

Mr. Haig, the Home Secretary, opposing said that at present the powers in relation to administration and justice were vested in High Courts by Letters Patent issued by His Majesty which were subject to the Legislative powers of the Government of India. The All Parties Conference in its report had provided that Courts should exercise such powers as were vested in them by Letters Patent and that such Letters Patent may be amended from time to time by further Letters Patent.

The Statutory Commission would go into the question of Courts and the Judiciary shortly. This was therefore not the time for making any change. He, however, would place the resolution before the Simon Commission.

Mr. Ray Choudhury, replying, said that the All Parties Conference report must be taken as a whole and not in parts. When India got Dominion Status it did not matter whether the Letters Patent were changed by Executive order or by legislation, for the Executive would be entirely responsible to the Legislature. The resolution was lost. The other resolutions on the agenda were not moved. The Council then adjourned.

On the 17TH SEPTEMBER the Council of State re-assembled to discuss four non-official resolutions and three non-official Bills.

#### Agricultural Report.

Sir Pairoze SEFHNA moved his resolution recommending the Government to take steps to give prompt effect to the recommendations of the Agricultural Commission, particularly those having direct and intimate bearing on the uplift of the agricultural population. He contended that the report of the Commission was marked by thoroughness and patient and profound investigation, which invested it with more than ordinary importance and value. It would be a thousand pities if the unanimous report did not result in prompt and tangible action which would lead in a steadily increasing measure to the general improvement of the material, educational and moral condition of the agricultural population of this country.

What was wanted, said Sir Pairoze, was the framing of a programme to be worked out steadily, say, during the next five or ten years by each Provincial Government, and also by the Central Government. All this should be done as soon as possible within a time limit, which should be rigidly observed. If such a time limit was not enforced, and if things were allowed to drift with endless red-tapism, the result would be that the initial interest and enthusiasm would wane, and the labours of the Commission would be wasted and the report condemned to oblivion.

#### Mr. Pantulu's Amendment.

Mr. Ramdas PANTULU moved an amendment urging to give effect to those recommendations relating to the establishment of central land mortgage banks.

He declared that the report was, on the whole, disappointing. The co-operative movement, which was trying to solve the problems of the agriculturist, had immense potentialities, but hitherto, it had only attempted to cater to the short-term credit needs of the ryot, and not financed him for long-term needs. Long-term finance could be handled only by land mortgage banks, but small primary land mortgage banks scattered all over rural India would not enable the ryot to raise sufficient long-term credit, but

would make such money dear by offering competing rates of interest and thus injure the movement. Mr. Pantulu asserted that it was necessary to establish provincial central land mortgage banks to raise the necessary credit and finance the primary mortgage banks.

Sir Mahomed HABIBULLAH, in the course of a sympathetic speech, detailed the measures taken to give early consideration to the recommendations of the Commission, particularly those concerning the uplift of the agricultural population. At the outset he welcomed the desire manifested by the Council for expediting the recommendations. As regards the majority of the recommendations, action could be taken only by the Local Governments, while a good number concerned the Government India.

In order to facilitate the consideration of the recommendations, the Government of India, Sir Mahomed said, invited on July 23rd last, all Local Governments to send representatives to a conference to be held in Simla on October 1st and the following days. The object of the conference was to secure personal discussion and to find out the best methods of giving effect to the recommendations of the Commission. Besides this conference, there would be a conference of those interested in the Co-operative movement, to discuss matters arising from the report, particularly of the nature specified in the amendment of Mr. Ramdas Pantulu, and furthermore, there would be a Co-operative Societies Conference to discuss co-operative measures.

Concluding, Sir Mahomed Habibullah said that already the Government of India were considering the recommendations which concerned them primarily, such as the proposal to establish an Agricultural Research Council. He regretted that he could not give any decisive reply on the resolution and suggested its withdrawal.

After Mr. Mahendra Prasad, Dr. Rama Rau, Mr. Desikachari and Mr. Akbar Khan had supported the resolution, Sir Phiroz Sethna rose to reply.

He removed certain misunderstandings which his resolution had created. He asked for every recommendation of the Commission to be given prompt effect. He also wanted to give effect to the specific points raised by Mr. Pantulu. Withdrawal of his motion would be paradoxical as the Government Member had not opposed it.

Sir Arthur Froom raised a point of order, remarking that the acceptance of the motion would commit the Government to give prompt effect to all recommendations.

Sir Henry Moncrieff-Smith over-ruled the objection.

Finally, Sir Mohamed Habibullah explained the Government's attitude. He said that he had advised withdrawal thinking that the purpose of the mover would have been served by bringing the matter to the notice of the House. But if the Council did not share that view, he was prepared to accept the amended resolution. He, however, remarked that the object of Sir Phiroz Sethna and Mr. Rama Rau was not to wake sleeping dogs, but attempt to rouse watchful dogs.

The amended resolution was then passed.

#### Time Test in Postal Dept.

The Council next adopted the resolution of Mr. Khaparde, as amended by Mr. Clow, for steps to revise the time tests obtaining at present in the Postal Department.

Mr. Clow said that an official of the rank of Postmaster-General would be deputed for the purpose, and the co-operation for the Postal and Railway Mail Service Union be sought in the inquiry.

#### Dr. Gour's Bill.

Sir Sankaran Nair moved the consideration of Dr. Gour's Bill passed by the Assembly which required that no person governed by the Hindu Law, other than one who has been from his birth an idiot, should be excluded from inheritance or from any right or or share in the joint family property, by reason only of any disease, deformity or physical or mental defect.

The Maharaja of Darbhanga opposed the motion. He deprecated the tendency of the Reformed Legislature to interfere with Hindu Law.

Mr. Pantulu, supporting the motion, twitted the Maharajadhiraja of Darbhanga and Inala Ramsarandas saying that "dharma" ought to change from time to time. The speaker claimed to determine in the legislative bodies what "Dharma" was.

Mr. S. R. Das (Law Member) explained that the Government would maintain a neutral attitude and members of Government would not vote on this question.

Sir Sankaran Nair, summing up the debate, said that it was absolute ignorance to say that religion was associated with the laws of succession.

The motion for consideration having been adopted, Mr. Kumar Sankar Ray Choudhury moved an amendment, the effect of which was to include among the beneficiaries of a joint family property even lunatics and idiots. Mr. Choudhury contended that congenital disabilities should not stand in the way of receiving benefits.

Sir Sankaran Nair opposed the amendment. He was not prepared to accept it at that late stage. The Lower House had excluded lunatics and idiots as they stood on an entirely different footing.

The amendment was pressed to a division and lost, 7 voting for and 13 against. Sir Sankaran Nair's motion for the final passage of the Bill was adopted without a division. The House then adjourned.

### Election to the Central Committee.

On the 18TH SEPTEMBER the galleries of the Council of State were more largely crowded than usual when the Council considered the resolution to elect its quota to the Central Committee to sit with the Simon Commission.

When the house met Sir Mohammed Habibullah was going to move the resolution, but the Mr. Ramdas Pantula raised a point of order that the resolution was against the spirit of the resolution passed by the Council last February which contemplated a committee elected by the Central Legislature. Now that the Assembly refused to elect the Committee, this resolution ran counter to the spirit of the original resolution.

The President ruled that the motion was strictly in order.

Sir Mohammed then moved:—"That in pursuance of the resolution adopted by this Council on the 22nd February, 1928, the Council do proceed by such method as the Hon'ble President may direct to elect three of its members to the Central Committee to sit with the Indian Statutory Commission." In moving the resolution he maintained that it was the logical and inevitable outcome of the resolution passed in February last.

### Seth Govind Das' Opposition.

Seth Govind Das opposing the motion said that this Committee could not be called a Committee of the Central Legislature as the Assembly stood out of it. After the All Parties Conference the boycott movement against the Commission was stronger in the country than it was in last February. The Provincial Councils which elected the Committee of Co-operation did not, he maintained, represent the real opinion in the country. The Government knew their position and that was why they dared not accept the challenge of the leaders to dissolve the Assembly on the Simon Commission issue.

Sir Umar Hayat Khan denied that the Lucknow Conference was a representative one. The Mahomedans in the Punjab, he said, had faith in co-operation with the British who saved the country from foreign inroads.

Sir Phiroze Sethna opposed the motion.

Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy asked the Council not to follow the lead of the obstructionists.

Sardur Shivdev Singh Uberoi in supporting the resolution stressed that the Sikhs were an important minority community and in electing the Committee their claims should not be ignored.

Mr. Ramdas Pantulu held that after the Nehru Committee Report the Simon Commission ought not to have decided to come to India again. The trend of the majority of opinion in the country was now unmistakable. What they meant to do might very well have been done from the White Hall. The Nehru Committee Report was no gesture of co-operation to the Simon Commission. It was meant only to show that India knew her mind. He challenged Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy to seek election on this issue from the constituency to be presently vacated by Seth Govindas.

Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy:—I accept the challenge provided Pandit Motilal Nehru does not go from village to village.

Mr. Khaparde was not convinced that by boycotting the Commission the country's interest would be advanced.

Sir Arthur Froom was of opinion that the Council of State should not follow the lead of the Assembly.

Sardar Charanjit Singh and Nawab Akbar Khan signified their support of the resolution while Mr. Kumar Sankar Rai opposed it.

Mr. Rama Prasad Mukherjee speaking with the experience of one who

faced the electorate only a month ago said that the majority opinion in the country was in favour of boycott of the Commission. Proceeding, the speaker said that much had been made of the House being a corrective Chamber but the people in the country knew in what way they corrected.

Sir Dadabhoy: Then why are you here?

Mr. Mukherjee: To correct the corrective impulse of some members of this House.

Sir George Godfrey from his long experience in the country maintained that the masses of people looked to moderate Indians and officials for guidance.

Mr. Vernon claimed that the officials knew the masses of the people and their problems more intimately than the Congress leaders to whose political tenets they did not subscribe.

After Lala Ramsaran Das had supported the motion Sir Mahomed Habibullah replied. He said that he was rather surprised to see that the motion gave rise to a full-dress debate in the house, but the speakers only covered the same ground traversed in February last. It was not on his own initiative that he brought the motion before the house. He was bound to do so as the Leader of the house in pursuance of the resolution passed by the house in February last.

The motion was then put to vote and carried by a majority.

In declaring the method of election the President announced that up to Thursday noon nominations for membership for the Committee would be received by the Council Secretary.

The house then passed the Bill further amending the Indian Mines Act of 1913 as passed by the Assembly. The house then adjourned.

#### Succession Act Amend. Bill.

On the 19TH SEPTEMBER the Council of State had one of the briefest sittings when the only business transacted there was the passing of the Bill further to amend the Succession Act of 1925, as passed by the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Narayan Prasad Asthana in moving the Bill pointed out the conflict between the different High Courts as to whether a certificate could be applied for and granted in respect of a portion of a debt. The Allahabad High Court held that this could not be done while the Calcutta High Court held the contrary view. The Calcutta view seemed to be more reasonable and equitable and the Bill was meant to give effect to that view. The Bill was passed without a dissentient. The Council was adjourned.

#### Nominated for Election.

On the 21ST SEPTEMBER the Council of State discussed seven official Bills, and elected three members to sit with the Simon Commission.

The President read out the names of the 12 members nominated for election to the Central Committee to co-operate with the Simon Commission. He then announced that Major Akbar Khan and Mr. Mahmood Suhrawardy had withdrawn.

Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy also withdrawing from the contest explained that he belonged to the Parsi community, which was a small one, whose co-operation with the Government was a matter of common knowledge. He withdrew in order to avoid coming in the way of the two large communities in India, Hindus and Mahomedans. Moreover, he believed that European interests must be safeguarded by the election of one member from the Upper House.

The Council then passed without discussion the Trades Union Act (Amendment) Bill, the Income-Tax Bill, and the Succession Act (Amendment) Bill as passed by the Assembly.

#### Insurance Bill.

On the motion of Sir Geoffrey Corbett, the Council passed the Insurance Bill, as passed by the Assembly.

Sir Phiroze Sethna welcomed the measure on behalf of the commercial Indian community. The Indian Merchants' Chamber, Bombay, had urged that such legislation should be enacted, but even now, the Bill did not fully satisfy their requirements. The Government could no longer postpone the demand that

all companies, Indian and non-Indian, should furnish returns annually of their premium income, of the claims they paid and other details.

Sir Phiroze explained the alleged defects in the Bill, according to which sums re-insured by insurance companies either in India or abroad were not to be mentioned in the figures to be submitted. Thus the object of the Bill, which was to collect complete figures, would be frustrated. He desired to move some amendments, but if it was too late, Government should give an assurance that the amendments would be brought forward in the Delhi session.

Sir Geoffrey Corbett promised to examine the points raised by Sir Phiroze Sethna, and introduce amendments later. He said that postal insurance could not be dealt with except by amending the Postal Act. The intention of the Act was that any agent doing insurance business in India should furnish figures.

The Bill was passed without alteration.

The Council also passed, without any discussion, the Madras Salt Act (Amendment) Bill, and the Bill providing for the protection of the match industry.

#### A Repealing Bill.

Mr. S. R. Das, Law Member, moved the consideration of the Bill to amend certain enactments and to repeal certain other enactments, as passed by the Assembly.

Mr. Rama Prasad Mookerji urged the deletion of the contemplated addition of the following sub-section to Section 89 of the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908.

"Nothing in this Section shall be deemed to alter or otherwise affect any provision of the Letters Patent of any High Court."

Mr. Mookerji pointed out that the Legislature should be vested with powers to modify the Letters Patent. The latter should not be given a higher position than an act passed by the Legislature. If any future Indian Legislature enacted an act which affected the provision of the Letters Patent, it would then be necessary to repeal this sub-section.

The Law Member said that the Privy Council had upheld this provision, and it was necessary.

The Council rejected Mr. Mookerji's amendment, and passed the Bill.

#### Election to Central Committee.

After the normal business was over, the Swarajists with Sir Phiroze Sethna and Mr. N. P. Asthana walked out as the election of the Central Committee was proceeded with.

Sir Ebrahim Haroon Jaffer raised an objection to the nomination of Raja Nawab Ali Khan. He contended that the necessary consent had not been obtained from Raja Nawab Ali Khan before he was nominated. The speaker was in possession of a telegram from that member, sent in reply to a telegram from Sir Umar Hayat Khan, which said: "No objection, provided the majority of the members support me."

Sir Ebrahim pointed out that it was a conditional consent obtained after the nomination had been made. He, therefore, urged that the nomination of Raja Nawab Ali Khan be declared null and void.

Sir Umar Hayat Khan declared that Raja Nawab Ali Khan had told him that he desired to be nominated.

The President held that the nomination was in order, and the election was commenced. The result was announced in the afternoon after scrutiny of the papers.

Sir Sankaran Nair, Sir Arthur Froom and Raja Nawab Ali Khan were elected by the Council of State to sit with the Simon Commission.

#### Woman's Right of Succession.

On the 26TH SEPTEMBER the Council of State held the last meeting of the autumn session.

Sir Sankaran Nair moved the consideration of the Bill as amended by the select committee to alter the order in which certain heirs of a Hindu male dying intestate are entitled to succeed to his estate.



This Committee, consisting of the Law Member, Sir Sankaran Nair, Messrs A. N. Sinha, R. P. Mookherjee, Ramsaram Das, N. P. Asthana, Sir Maneckjee Dadabhoy, G. S. Khaparde and Ramdas Pantulu, recommended the passage of the bill with some changes which they considered did not require the republication of the bill.

They discussed at length the expediency of inserting "a son's wife" at the head of the order of succession set forth, but opinion being divided they decided not to make the insertion. They also held it unnecessary either to assign retrospective effect to the provisions of the Bill or to defer its coming into operation and therefore omitted any reference to the date on which a succession opens.

Sir Sankaran's motion for consideration of the bill having been adopted, Mr. Ramaprasad Mookherjee moved an amendment, the effect of which was that a son's widow's claim over a son's daughter, a daughter's daughter, a sister and a sister's son, which will rank next in order of succession after a father's father and before a father's brother.

Mr. Mukherjee contended that a son's widow occupied a peculiar position and was denied all rights though she took the "gotra" of her husband and became a 'sapindaja'.

Sir Sankaran opposed the motion, holding that the position of widows stood on a different footing from those females having blood relations. Opinion on this matter had not been fully collected and the insertion of this right was premature. They had to decide the question whether they would give a widow an absolute or a qualified estate. It was not for want of sympathy, but a number of questions had to be considered before making this amendment.

Mr. Khaparde supported Mr. Mookherjee's motion, complaining that Hindu social reformers were proceeding with piecemeal legislations. He held that a son's widow was also a blood relation according to the Hindu Dharma-shastras.

Sir Umar Hyat Khan explained the attitude of the Moslems, who would remain neutral on such legislation and he hoped that the Hindus would do the same when a question amending Moslem Law was taken up.

Mr. N. P. Asthana opposed the amendment.

Mr. S. R. Das (Law Member) declared that members of the Government would remain neutral. He said that the question of succession of a son's widow had not been circulated for opinion.

The motion was defeated by nine votes against 14. A large number of members remained neutral.

Mr. Mahendra Prasad moved an amendment to the effect that a sister's son should be eliminated from the order of succession.

The amendment was opposed by Sir Sankaran Nair, Mr. Ramaprasad Mookherjee and Mr. Asthana, and supported by Mr. Khaparde, but was lost.

In the proviso to clause two it was added in the select committee "Provided a sister's son shall not include a son adopted after a sister's death." This Mr. Ramaprasad Mookherjee wanted to amend into: "A sister's son shall include an adopted son, provided such adoption is made by a sister and her husband jointly or by a sister after her husband's death." This too was lost.

On the motion of Mr. Das the House agreed to correct a drafting error by which clause three of the Bill was amended, making it clear that nothing in the Act shall vest in a son's daughter, a daughter's daughter, or a sister an estate larger than, or different in kind from that possessed by a female in a property inherited by her from a male according to the school of the Mithakshara law by which the male was governed.

No other amendment was made and the Bill as amended by the Council was carried and will be laid before the Assembly in the Delhi session.

The Council then adjourned 'sine die'.

# The Bombay Legislative Council.

## The Bardoli Satyagraha.

H. E. the Governor addressing the Legislative Council, which open at Poona on the 23RD JULY 1925, referred mainly to the Bardoli situation giving a short history of what occurred since the start of the unfortunate dispute which, he said, now assumed proportions entirely out of keeping with the actual cause.

Referring to the interview of two members of the Council with him at Mahabaleswar His Excellency said that when these members left Mahabaleswar, government was satisfied that they appreciated and agreed with the Government suggestions which were that government be prepared to grant a fresh enquiry provided the revised assessment was paid up. Unfortunately there was for some reason a change in their attitude. Later Government went still further for they definitely promised through the Education Minister a fresh inquiry on the same terms. He did not see what Government could have done more. "Since that date" said His Excellency "constant efforts were made by myself and members of the Government to bring about settlement. I personally, visited Surat last Wednesday in the hope that such settlement might ensue. No settlement however was achieved and it was not possible for Government to delay any longer in making final decisions. The Government is of opinion : and I feel sure Hon'ble members agree that any announcement on the matter of such importance should be made to elected representatives of the people. Moreover in view of all that has happened in the past few months and also in view of the vote taken on this question in the budget session, not only this was a proper course to pursue but it is the constitutional course and I have endeavoured since. I have been here to act entirely in the most constitutional manner possible. I therefore take the opportunity of putting before this honourable house views of the Government as to the present situation and the definite and considered decisions of Government which had been approved of by the Government of India. I say with intention that these decisions have been approved of by the Government of India because issues have been raised in Bardoli which have very wide significance and indeed it is a common ground that this question has become one of All-India importance. My Government had always had it impressed upon them that the issue was a very clear one, namely, whether reassessment of landlords in Bardoli Taluka was a fair or unfair one.

### The Issue.

If, however, the Government is to judge what the issue on the speeches and letters which were spoken and written lately and on actions that had been and were being taken to interfere with the administration of the district, the issue might appear to be a much wider one and in fact one which in a sentence is whether the writ of His Majesty the King Emperor is to run in a portion of His Majesty's dominions or whether the edict of some non-official body of individuals is to be obeyed. That issue, if that is the issue, is one which Government are prepared to meet with all power which Government possesses and by the decision of the representatives of the people of the district as to whether they accept or not the conditions which Government lay down. Before any enquiry can be promised it will be clearly demonstrated what is the issue before the Government and people of this presidency and before the Government of India. If only the question to be dealt with in justice or injustice of re-assessment, Government is prepared to submit the whole case after the revenue due to Government was paid and the present agitation entirely ceases to a full, open and independent inquiry as outlined in the statement already published. In making their pro-

posals Government is anxious above all that the agriculturists of Bardoli be relieved as soon as possible from the unfortunate situation in which they had been involved as a result of a campaign against the payment of land revenue, justice of which has been disputed by members of this house. I, therefore, on behalf of Government put before the members the same proposals I put before those who saw me at Surat. It is unnecessary to restate these proposals. I must make it quite clear that they are not proposals put forward as a basis of compromise but definite final decisions of the Government. They are fair and must commend themselves to the mind of any moderate man. Their conditions must be fulfilled before any fresh inquiry can be promised and they cannot be altered.

#### Governor's Ultimatum.

The Governor maintained that the only point connected with Government's demand for payment of a revised assessment which, he said, was obviously a vital condition, being a lawful constitutional demand, the repudiation of which was both unlawful and unconstitutional. He was informed at Surat that this condition could not be accepted, consequently no settlement was possible. But he reminded the members especially those elected to represent Bardoli that it was their constitutional right to speak on behalf and decide in the interests of the constituents. The Governor hoped that only the interests of the cultivators would influence the members in the matter. It was impossible for the present situation to continue. The final decision must be reached as soon as possible. Government, therefore, asked the members concerned to communicate the decision whether or not they on behalf of constituents accepted or refused the conditions which must be fulfilled before a fresh inquiry could be set up, to the Revenue Member within a fortnight from now. He could not believe that having regard to the hardship on the agriculturists and the bitterness of feeling which has been engendered as a result of conflict between the Govt. and the people concerned, the proposals will be rejected. But it was his duty to make it perfectly clear that if the conditions were not accepted and settlement not secured, Govt. would in order to be in full compliance of law take what action they considered desirable and necessary and utilise all powers to ensure that Government's statutory authority is maintained in every way. No Government could tolerate the position in which private individuals endeavoured to put themselves above law or take part in organisations which have the effect of inducing others to do so. To permit that would be the very negation of Government.

#### Not a Threat.

The Governor continued that his remarks were not a threat, nothing being further from his mind. They were merely a statement of fact and it was his duty to the House and the people of Bardoli to make them, so that, the position of Government could not again be misinterpreted or misunderstood. Nobody deny that there was a campaign of civil disobedience in Bardoli and civil disobedience was an act of lawlessness, however convinced the participators might be of the justice of their case and lawlessness was none the less lawlessness because it might be fostered or encouraged by persons holding strong convictions or because its practice might evoke from some men or women qualities worthy of better cause.

#### A Warning.

The Governor uttered a warning that to seek to supersede respect for law by the private will of any citizen or body of citizens was to head straight for anarchy.

The Governor concluded by reference to the approaching end of his term of office and said it was indeed a sad thought to him that at the end of his term, the Government was faced with a situation such as now confronted them. Unconstitutional methods such as civil disobedience were being supported by a section of people particularly when the Government never had been unwilling to meet the reasonable wishes of the House, constitutionally expressed. He was confident that if members placed themselves in the position of the Government they would decide that Government met Bardoli cultivators fairly even as he tried in

his time here to mete out to all whatever their class, creed or race that justice tempered with mercy.

"The Governor urged the Council not to take hasty decisions but think well over the grave issues involved and he did not doubt that sound commonsense which always has been Bombay's guiding star would again lead them to a decision which would end the situation fraught with grave possibilities. "You have often taken my advice in the past," he concluded, "and I have much gratitude to you for doing so. I ask you to do so now on what I fully realise is the most important issue on which I had ever spoken to you."

After the Governor's address about three-fourths of an hour was devoted to answering questions. The house then passed bills amending the Bombay Public Conveyance Act, Indian Registration Act and Bombay Local Boards Act. The bill to amend the Bombay City Municipalities Act thereby giving to Government the control over educational institutions maintained by the Municipality was stoutly opposed. It was ultimately withdrawn.

Before the house rose for the day, the Finance Member announced that the resolution to appoint a Committee to assist the Simon Commission will come up for discussion on the first of August. The adjournment motion was not moved at all.

#### Supplementary Grants.

On the 24TH JULY the Council held one of the shortest sittings and was occupied mainly with some minor supplementary grants. One of these, which related to the cost of about three lakhs for a bungalow built by the Development Department for its Director, now transferred according to a previous agreement to the Public Works Department, was severely criticised by the opposition.

It was contended that this was merely a device to show that the losses of the Development Department were less by this amount. If, as the Government intended, the bungalow was to house a High Court Judge, a rent of ten per cent of his salary would be far less than economic rent. The bungalow would thus be a source of less revenues and the Government were, therefore, asked to sell it off and out of the proceeds build a bungalow for the Judge at less cost. The Minister-in-Charge replied that the question of selling it was before the Housing Committee of the Council to which the decision might be left.

The House finally approved of the transfer and then adjourned.

#### The Peasants' Petition. -

On the 25TH JULY elaborate police arrangements were made around the council hall in view of the procession of peasants who wanted to present their petition protesting against the Small Holdings Bill to the President of the Council. A procession numbering about 10,000 reached the council hall at about 2 and as the procession was not allowed inside the council compound certain representatives of the peasants went inside the compound and requested Mr. Chandrachud to present their petition to the President.

The procession which was outside formed itself into a meeting which was addressed by Mr. N. C. Kelkar. He requested the members of the council to protest against the bill. The meeting again formed itself into a procession and marched back amidst scenes of great enthusiasm to the Shivaji Mandir where it broke up.

The Council met at 2. After question time Mr. Chandrachud asked permission of the President to present to the House a petition on behalf of the peasants of the presidency in regard to the Land Revenue and Small Holding Bill. The President before allowing the member to proceed with the presentation of the petition explained for information of the House, the rules governing the procedure of presentation of public petitions. The language of such petition, he said, must be courteous. The petition should contain a prayer and must bear the signature of the member of the Council who presents it to the House to indicate that the member is responsible for its bonafides. The President also made it clear that such petitions would not be taken recognition of unless the conditions were complied with. The petition was then presented. Signatories

to the petition made it clear in the petition that the Bill is detrimental to the interests of peasants.

The Council then proceeded with the business on the agenda.

#### Indian Registration Act Amend.

The Hon. Mr. Rafiuddin Ahmed moved for reference to a select committee the Bill further to amend the Indian Registration Act 1908 in its application to the Bombay Presidency. Mr. Anderson, settlement commissioner, supporting the motion said that the Bill was circulated to several public bodies to elicit public opinion. Referring to opinions expressed by several public bodies in the presidency, Mr. Anderson said that these bodies were mere puppets and dummies who freely indulged in "papatpanchi".

Many members opposed the motion including Mr. Nariman. The members particularly took objection to the terms puppets, dummies, "papatpanchi", and requested the President to ask Mr. Anderson to withdraw the expression. Mr. Nariman said that it was the height of impudence on the part of the Commissioner to dishonour the opinion of public bodies.

Mr. Rafiuddin said that when the first reading of the Bill was passed, public opinion was in favour of the Bill. But now he found that public opinion was against the Bill. He then withdrew the motion.

A point of order was then raised whether a minister can withdraw a motion when a Bill had passed the first reading. The leave of the house was then sought for and it was granted. The motion was withdrawn and the Bill stood as it was. The house then adjourned.

On the 27TH JULY discussion on Syed Munawar's Bill for giving four additional seats to labour in the Bombay Municipal Corporation and for reducing the franchise qualification from Rs. 10 to Rs. 3 was resumed. The bill proposed nomination, but the Corporation desired election of three members by electoral college consisting of about 150 representatives of different registered trade unions. Messrs Husainbhoy Laljee, Nariman, Jairamdas and several others supported the bill, but insisted on the system of election. After the first reading the bill was referred to a Select Committee.

#### Maternity Benefits.

Mr. Asavale next moved the first reading of the Bill to regulate employment of women in factories in respect to the period of their confinement and make provision for payment of maternity benefits. The bill provided that women should be allowed to stay away six weeks before and after their confinement, should be paid maternity benefit allowance, and the agency for carrying out the provisions of the bill should be the Government itself.

Mr. Swaminarayan moved an amendment that the employer should be the paying agency and not Government.

Loud discussion ensued in which some interesting points were raised. The bill proposed to levy a small cess on all factories for the purpose.

Sir, Gulam Husain, general member, in opposing the bill said that the mill industry was already heavily taxed. It would be the last straw that would break the camel's back. The member also pointed out several practical difficulties in executing the Bill. Continuing the speaker said that legislation of this type should be an All-India affair, otherwise Bombay industries will be handicapped due to competition with sister provinces. Further no other country had enacted similar legislation which was in advance of public opinion. All factories would not be able to comply with the provision of the bill and an extensive staff would be required for its operation.

Mr. Nariman accused Government of want of sympathy and said the opposition was unexpected for humane measures like this.

Mr. Lalji Naranji also opposed the bill. He said that industries were unable to bear any additional burden. The speaker accused Mr. N. M. Joshi for his vote on the ratio question and added that Mr. Joshi was responsible for the present crisis.

Mr. Husainbhoy Lalji in a vehement speech also opposed the Bill. Some interest was created when Mr. Shivdasani asked whether unmarried women would also get maternity benefit as the Bill had stipulated that all women employees should get it.

Replying to a point raised by some members that the proposed legislation was analogous to the Workmen's Compensation Act, Sir Gulam Husain said that employers were responsible for accidents occurring within factories but they could not be held responsible for pregnancy or confinement because nothing happened within the factory to account for it. The House then adjourned.

## Bombay Hereditary Officers,

On the 30TH JULY the Council turned down Rao Bahadur Kale's Bill amending the law relating to the Bombay hereditary offices. The act sought to give retrospective effect in respect of adoptions made prior to 1923 when the amending Act was passed so as to give some rights to the mother and grandmother as were enjoyed by the widow of the deceased watarandar.

Mr. Jadav, ex-Minister, who moved the first reading of the amending Bill to restrict the unlimited right to adoption by Hindu widows in the Bombay Presidency, had to run gauntlet of the opposition.

Speakers opposing characterised it as a retrograde measure and said that it should not be introduced as the Bombay law was more progressive and liberal in respect of women's rights. It was also opposed on the ground that it offended the religious sentiment of Hinduism.

Mr. Jadav had to withdraw the Bill, having secured not a single supporter. The House then adjourned.

On the 31ST JULY after a protracted discussion of about nearly two hours, Mr. Bori's Bill to amend the Bombay Municipality Act in such a way as to do away with the payment of fees to members of the Standing Committee of the Corporation, was pressed to a division which resulted in 52 votes for and 33 against the Bill. The first reading of the Bill was passed. The second and third readings of the Bill were then moved and were passed.

## Revenue Assessments.

Mr. V. N. Jog then moved the following resolution :—"That this Council disapproves of the resolution issued by Government on the report of the land revenue assessment committee and recommends of His Excellency the Governor in Council that the Bill for the amendment of the provisions of the Bombay Land Revenue Code 1897 relating to the principles of revising the assessment of land revenue should be drafted in consultation with non-official members of this council before it is submitted to the Government of India for sanction."

The mover denounced the Government obduracy in not giving effect to the recommendations of the joint parliamentary committee and also the land revenue assessment committee appointed by the Bombay Council which were to the effect that land revenue assessment should be brought under the control of the popular legislatures. Government had not only ignored those recommendations, but had proposed to introduce a bill involving the principle that rental values should form the basis of the revenue assessment. The speaker said that the Bardoli trouble was the result of the Government's arbitrary policy.

Rao Sahib Patil moved an amendment that the bill be drafted in consultation with a committee of five non-official elected members of the council.

Rao Bahadur Bhimabhai Naik supported the amendment and warned Government that many more Bardoli will arise if land revenue assessment was not brought under the control of the Council.

Messrs. R. G. Pradhan and P. R. Chikodi also strongly supported the resolution. Mr. Anderson, settlement commissioner, opposed the resolution. The house then adjourned.

## Simon Commission Motion Carried.

On the 1ST AUGUST in a tense atmosphere and in a full House crowded with visitors in the galleries Sir Chunilal Mehta, Leader of the House, moved :—

"That the Legislative Council do proceed to elect a Committee of seven representatives to take part in a joint Conference with the Indian Statutory Commission as stated in the letter from the Chairman of the Indian Statutory Commission to the Viceroy and Governor-General, dated February 6, 1928."

Sir Chunilal, in a short speech, said that much had been written and spoken regarding the principles and details of the procedure of the Commission and debates had taken place on the subject in legislative bodies elsewhere and therefore very little remained to be said. He referred to Sir John Simon's letter, dated February 6, 1928, which suggested that steps should be taken to move the local Legislative Councils to elect their representatives. Since that letter was written the Commission had declared the abandonment of the reservation as to "in camera" evidence, a point specially raised by the Punjab Legislative Council Committee.

After Mir Mahomed Balooch (Sind Mahomedan) opposed the resolution, Mr. V. N. Jog (Swarajist) stated that co-operation with the Commission was a negation of the principle of self-determination accepted by the Indian National Congress.

Sir Vasantrao Dabholkar (nominated) characterised boycott as a negative policy and said that they would gain much by co-operation.

Mr. K. F. Nariman (Swarajist) began by saying that it was a strange irony of fate that on August 1, Lokhmanya Tilak's death anniversary, an Indian member of the Council should send a message of India's slavery to the world. He wanted to enter the nation's protest against the resolution and challenged Sir Chunnilal Mehta to move his resolution anywhere outside before any popular assembly of any caste or creed, and not in "that fraudulent and farcical House." The speaker, in that case, was sure that not only the resolution but the body of the mover would be thrown away.

Mr. Nariman's opposition was not directed to the personnel of the Commission at all as an Indian Commission too would have been as bad as the present one, or even worse. The House then adjourned.

On the 2ND AUGUST prior to the commencement of the sitting the president gave a ruling disallowing Mr. Chikodi's modified motion for the adjournment of the House to discuss the Governor's address on the Bardoli situation.

The original adjournment motion of which notice was given on the 23rd instant related to a discussion of the Bardoli situation pure and simple, but was later modified on the 25th, to mean a discussion on the Governor's speech on the affairs at Bardoli delivered while opening the Council.

The President said that he took a few days to give his decision. Hopes were and are being entertained of a settlement of the Bardoli dispute. As the Council was coming to a close he wanted to give a ruling. The notified adjournment motion if allowed would create a new departure not known to any legislature. A discussion of the Governor's speech would involve his personal views and conduct and there was a distinct Standing Order to the effect that no such discussion should be allowed in the Council. The speech was delivered by Sir Leslie Wilson in the capacity of Governor and no doubt a certain policy was outlined. He, however, disallowed the motion in the present form. He had his entire sympathy with Bardoli and could have allowed the adjournment motion to discuss the situation being a matter of urgent public importance while the Governor's speech on it itself was not of that character.

The Council then resumed the discussion of Sir Chunnilal Mehta's motion to elect a Committee of the Council to take part in a joint Conference with the Simon Commission. The House was full and the galleries were crowded.

Shaikh Abdul Latif, who spoke first, said that the Commission was to be welcomed since it might suggest a solution in the interests of the minor communities.

Mr. Addyman, on behalf of the European community, supported the motion. He said that non-co-operation had left the legacy of boycott, which every well-wisher of the country regretted.

Rao Bahadur Kale (Responsivist) observed that unless the Commission was a mixed Commission including Indians co-operation on reciprocal terms was impossible. There was no fear that their case would go by default if they boycotted it.

Mr. J. L. Rieu (Revenue Member) wanted clearly to define the attitude of the European Government members. On his behalf but not as Revenue Member, he gave cordial support to the motion. In the first place, viewing the whole question in complete detachment, they considered it in the best interest of the Presidency that the Commission had invited their assistance on the future constitution and the rights and privileges of the several communities. Secondly, it was the duty of the Council to avail itself of opportunities for representing its views, a duty which it owed to the constituencies. Finally, he said he could understand the disappointment of some of the members due to the exclusion of Indians, and also their boycott policy. It would, however, be unfair on their part to prevent a large number of members who were desirous of offering co-operation to the Commission from doing so.

Mr. Rieu, replying to the imputations against the good faith and honour of the British Empire, said that he did not propose to deal with them. The British Government could well afford to reply on the verdict of mankind in this matter.

Mr. E. M. Munsifi (Bombay University) said that though he believed that the British connection, which had brought new political ideals and traditions to this country, was a necessity for India, even with that belief he opposed the Commission as a wanton, deliberate insult to India.

Mr. Jairamdas Doultram (Sind) challenged the Revenue Member to keep the official block aside and take the verdict of the House.

Mr. K. F. Nariman, interrupting, said: "He dare not."

The speaker continuing said that he could understand Khan Bahadur Butt's position but the exclusion of Indians was a blessing, but he failed to understand Mr. Noor Mahomed.

Mr. Jinnah would never join the Government on the ground that his proposal of joint electorates was not accepted by the Hindu Mahasabha. Mr. Jairamdas also pointed out that Lala Lajpat Rai's resolution for setting apart one crore of rupees every year for the depressed classes had been opposed by the Government in the Assembly.

Sir Gulam Husein Hidayatulla, General Member, said that it did not lie in the mouth of Mr. Jairamdas to talk of self-determination while he was touring all round the country saying that Hinduism would be in danger if Sind were separated. Regarding the Liberals who were talking platitudes the speaker instanced Sir Chimanlal Setalvad who wanted to raise the standard of the franchise. He hoped the minor communities would not be led away by the profession of the major communities.

Hon. Mr. Rafiuddin Ahmed (Minister) was much heckled and a number of points of order were raised as he spoke, and the President requested the members not to interrupt him.

Mr. Rafiuddin said he took the Commission to be an honourable body and their words as true. He alleged that separate electorates came only because the major communities did not grant their privileges to the minor.

After Mr. B. N. Desai (Swarajist) opposed the motion, Mr. Laljee Narainji (Independent) expressed his despair that the Council was so weak and meek that it did not demand even what was done by the Punjab Committee. If the non-Brahmins and Moslems had no confidence in the advanced Hindus he said, they ought to have insisted at least on their own inclusion.

Mr. B. V. Jadhav (Leader of the non-Brahmins) stated that he had a mandate from the Bombay Non-Brahmin Conference to co-operate. There was a consensus of opinion among the Non-Brahmins on the point.

Mr. N. R. Gurjal (non-Brahmin): "No, no".

Proceeding, Mr. Jadhav said that in the Bombay Presidency the non Brahmins, including the Marathas and allied communities, had their own grievances. They were in danger of losing what they possessed and the non-Brahmin cause would suffer if they boycotted the Commission.

Mr. Allison, *Legal Remembrancer*, remarked that at present the sovereignty of India had rested entirely with the British Parliament and that any kind of self-Government or any other thing could be given only by that body. The Simon Commission or any other Commission was bound to increase the political powers of Indians and safeguard the interests of the minorities.

After a number of speeches were made Mr. Chikodi (Non-Brahmin Independent), opposing the motion, complained that the British had not given his community sufficient literary, agricultural and technical education, and asked whether Parliament could concede political rights to the depressed classes.

The closure was now applied to the debate and Sir Chunilal Mehta did not make any speech in reply. The motion was taken to a division and declared carried by 64 to 40 votes.

#### Govt's, Land Revenue Policy.

On the 4TH AUGUST the Council resumed Mr. Jog's resolution on the land revenue policy.

Rao Bahadur Kale moved an amendment that the Bombay Land Revenue Code Amending Bill, published in the "Gazette" in 1928, should be withdrawn and a fresh Bill drafted in consultation with non-officials.

Mr. Gunjal moved an amendment that the Bill should be drafted in consultation with twenty-one members returned by the rural constituencies.

Mr. Noor Mahomed, supporting the resolution, complained that Sind was badly treated in the report of the Committee.

Mr. Khurro, supporting, observed that the rental was not the proper basis of assessment, but that the net profit of the zemindar ought to be the basis.

Mr. Brander, Excise Commissioner, opposing said that the rental value was the only protection of the ryots against over assessment. The debate had not concluded when the Council adjourned.

The Council also passed Dr. Ambedkar's Bill to amend the Bombay Hereditary Offices Act which was referred to a Select Committee.

On the 6TH AUGUST attendance in the House was considerably thin when the Revenue member rose to make his reply to Mr. Jog's resolution regarding Government's revenue policy. The Revenue Member in a lengthy speech declared that under the circumstances Government had to oppose the resolution. The resolution was carried. Non-official opinion was overwhelmingly in favour of the resolution.

The House then proceeded to discuss Mr. Pahaljani's resolution recommending



Government to pay for compulsory primary education. The discussion was not over when the House rose for the day.

On the 7TH AUGUST the Council met with a thin attendance. Replying to question regarding mill strike in Bombay, the Home Member said that Government would continue to do their best to assist negotiations between interested parties in any way which they may see to be possible but they cannot intervene directly as they have no power to do so and Government have no intention to give any relief to women and children who are suffering owing to the mill strike.

#### Compulsory Primary Education.

That Primary Education Act required thorough revision and that more funds should be provided for the expansion of transferred departments were statements made by the members who spoke on Mr. Pahaljani's resolution which was :—"This council recommends to Government that they may remedy by suitable adjustment the iniquity of contribution for compulsory primary education made to the local authorities for the last three years and may for future lay down equitable contribution."

Mr. Turner, Chief Secretary to Government, replying to the debate said that in course of his speech he learnt from the Finance Secretary that for six years more it would not be possible for Government to provide funds for the expansion of the transferred departments. The House then rose for tea.

The house reassembling after tea had no quorum and the bell was rung to call in members who were in the lobby. When a quorum was formed discussion on Mr. Pahaljani's resolution was taken up. Dewan Babadur Harilal Desai in a lengthy speech requested the mover of the resolution to withdraw the resolution as Government had been sanctioning several schemes for expansion of primary education and were trying their best to sanction further schemes to an extent to which their funds permitted. He also explained the line of action which Government was going to adopt in future regarding primary education.

Replying to the debate Mr. Pahaljani wanted to know from the minister before he withdrew his resolution whether Government was prepared to make statements that the scheme for compulsory education would be speedily sanctioned, as soon as they were submitted.

The Minister winding up the debate said that the need of the hour was removal of illiteracy of rural areas. Government were very liberal on their sanctioning schemes.

Mr. Pahaljani then with the leave of the house withdrew his resolution. The President then announced that the University Bill had received the assent of the Viceroy. The house then adjourned.

#### Board to Settle Mill Disputes.

On the 8TH AUGUST, after question time, Mr. S. K. Bole moved that this Council recommends to Government to appoint a Conciliation Board or Arbitration Board to settle the disputes between the millowners of Bombay and the millworkers. Mr. Bole said that the strikers had shown admirable patience and self-restraint but even those qualities had their limit. It was the duty of the Government to see that this limit was on no account reached.

Mr. R. S. Asavale moved an amendment to the effect that the Board should be an Arbitration Board and it included representatives of owners and workers.

Sir Gulam Husain Hidayatullah, General Member, opposed the resolution. He assured the house that nobody was more anxious than Government to bring about an immediate settlement of the dispute. He expressed his fear that even if Government appointed an Arbitration Board nobody was going to be bound by the decision of that Board. The real difficulty about Bombay labourers was that they did not recognise their leaders and Government did not know whom to deal with. Labour stood on their 17 demands and they would have nothing less than their full pound of flesh. The millowners on their side would not budge an inch from the position they had taken. How are the Government to proceed then in these circumstances? It was very difficult even to draft the terms of reference. Concluding the General member requested the mover of the resolution to withdraw his resolution.

Mr. S. C. Joshi gave an undertaking that Labour would abide by the terms of reference which Government would prepare.

The General Member then said that he would wish to have certain definite proposals made by the representatives of Labour in the house in regard to the course which the Government should adopt in bringing about a settlement of the strike.

After holding a private conference outside the hall in which the Labour representatives made certain proposals to the General Member, the General Member made a state-

ment in the house that Government were more anxious than anybody else to bring about a settlement in the mill dispute. He also stated that Labour representatives in the house had given him three proposals which he said Government would try to carry out. The proposals are :—(1) Government should call a conference of millowners to ascertain whether they were prepared to accept a Conciliatory Board which the Government would appoint. (2) If they agreed to a Conciliation Board Government should lay down the terms of reference. (3) If both parties agreed to the terms of reference then Government should appoint a Conciliation Board.

Mr. Bole then said that in view of the statement made by the General Member he was prepared to withdraw his resolution with the leave of the House. Mr. Bole's resolution was then withdrawn.

The house then proceeded with the resolution recommending the release of all prisoners undergoing sentence in connection with Malegaon riots. The mover withdrew the resolution in view of the Home Member's statement that he would consider the case of prisoners individually.

Dr. Solanki then moved a resolution to appoint a committee with a majority of non-official members of the Council to inquire into the educational and economic condition and the grievances of depressed classes and untouchables and of aboriginal tribes in the presidency and to recommend measures for their uplift. The resolution was passed.

The president then declared that *the council was prorogued*.

## The September Session.

### The Godhra Riot.

The next session of the Bombay Legislative Council, commenced at Poona on the 24TH SEPTEMBER with a comparatively thin attendance. At the outset the Home Member made a statement in connection with the Godhra communal riots. He read the following telegram from the District Magistrate of Godhra dated September 23rd: "The Civil Hospital has been under armed guard since the 19th. Groundless rumours are being raised to cause public uneasiness. Everything is quiet. Six arrests have been made up-to-date. I held a meeting of Hindu-Muslim leaders this afternoon and explained the steps taken and asked them to reassure the public and check mischievous rumours. Additional police has already been requisitioned and is arriving".

The Home Member assured the House that the Government was in close touch with the situation in Godhra, and any necessary reinforcements required by the local authorities to put down the disturbances would be forthcoming and sent. He also told the House that there had been no firing by the authorities. Since the 18th there had been no trouble. He hoped that the members would appreciate the fact that it was undesirable at this stage to discuss the occurrence as it would be the subject-matter of legal proceedings. Concluding, he expressed the sincere sympathy of the Government to the relatives of the gentlemen killed in the regrettable incident.

### Bombay Municipal Act Amendment.

The Council then passed the Bombay City Municipal Act Amending Bill.

### Land Revenue Code Amending Bill.

Concerning the Bombay Land Revenue Code Amending Bill the Revenue Member announced that the Government did not propose to proceed with it at present in view of the statement made by Sir Mahomed Habibullah in the Council of State that it was the intention of the Government of India to address a communique to the provincial governments on the question of land revenue legislation.

### Small Causes Court for Karachi.

The Home Member then moved for the first reading of the Bill to provide for the establishment of a Court of Small Causes at Karachi intending to give effect to the recommendations of the Civil Justice Committee on the lines of the Rangoon Small Causes Court Act of 1920.

Mr. Jafarndas Doulatram supporting suggested *inter alia* that lawyers should be appointed as Judges, while Mr. Noor Mahomed observed that recruitments should be made from the Bar and the Civil Service.

The Bill was referred to a select committee on the Home Member assuring that all suggestions would be threshed out in the select committee.

Another Government Bill to amend and repeal certain enactments was also passed.

## Bombay University Bill.

On the 25TH SEPTEMBER Mr. Desai, Minister, had to face strong non-official opposition when he introduced a Bill to amend the Bombay University Act of 1926 intending to make clear Section 18 in the University Act of 1928 which empowered the Senate to make provision for military training of students. The Bill also sought to transfer control over the policy of secondary education from the Syndicate to the Senate.

The non-official members, opposing, contended that the Bill took away the right of the University to provide for military training of students, and characterised it as mischievous on the ground that the Senate's statutes regarding secondary education would be subject to the sanction of the Chancellor, while the Ordinances of the Syndicate were not.

Minister Desai, in reply, said that the Government of Bombay fought with the Government of India on behalf of the University, and the Government of India conceded that the statute framed by the Senate which were subject to the sanction of the Government of Bombay formerly, should now be subject to the sanction of the Chancellor. Concerning Military Training, the Government of Bombay could not delegate powers to the University which it did not possess, and the matter rested with the Government of India.

The first reading of the Bill was pressed to a division and passed by 40 to 36 votes.

The motion to refer the Bill to a Select Committee was lost. Clause after clause was pressed to a division and the Bill was given a third reading, and passed.

## Supplementary Grants.

Demand for a supplementary grant of Rs. 22,000 for remodelling the Kander Brauch railway line from Maniwah was then made after which the House adjourned.

On the 26TH SEPTEMBER the Karnataka representatives in the Council complained that Sir Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah, the General Member, was partial to Sind in disregarding the claims of other parts of the Presidency with regard to the irrigation schemes, when Sir Ghulam Hussain made a demand for a supplementary grant of Rs. 1,53,000 for Irrigation.

The grant was made on the General Member assuring that irrigation schemes in other divisions, if productive, would be attended to.

A lively debate then ensued on a supplementary demand of 25 lakhs for additional funds required for the Lloyd Barrage and construction schemes and several points of order were raised and ruled out.

Mr. Lalji Naranji observed that such a big supplementary grant should have been placed first before the Finance Committee and information in regard to details should have been supplied to the Council.

The Finance Secretary apologised for not placing it before the Finance Committee and said he was engaged with the Public Accounts Committee.

The General Member in reply stated that a lump deduction of 25 lakhs was made by the Government from the original demand for irrigation (in preparing the current year's budget estimates) in order to avoid interest charges on any possible unpaid balances and the reason for the necessity for restoring the deduction was that the progress of the work had fulfilled all expectations.

The President then postponed discussion on the demand till Monday, to enable the Finance Committee to discuss the same beforehand.

Three other grants were also voted after which the House adjourned.

On the 27TH SEPTEMBER the Council adopted amidst cheers, Mr. Lalji Naranji's resolution placing on record its high appreciation of the services of Sir Chunilal Mehta as Member of the Executive Council and as the Leader of the House.

Mir Mahomed Balooch opposed the principle of recording appreciation of the services of Government members as they were expected to discharge their duties for the remuneration received. The speaker also observed that Sir Chunilal Mehta had not rendered distinct public service like Pandit Motilal Nehru and Lala Lajpat Rai.

All parties in the Council joined in the chorus of appreciation.

Private Bills were then taken up. Syed Munawar presented the report of the Select Committee on the Bombay Municipal Amending Bill, and moved for second reading.

Mr. Pahaljan's amendment to delete the word "Officers" from clause two and stating that "delegate" means a person elected by officers or members of registered trade unions, was pressed to a division and carried by 37 votes against 14, the Government members remaining neutral.

The principle of nomination was severely criticised when the Minister in charge of Local Self-Government moved an amendment to raise the number of nominated members

to 14 instead of 12 which had been brought down from 16 to the latter figure in the Select Committee. The amendment was pressed to a division and carried, 40 against 25.

On the 29TH SEPTEMBER the Home Member, replying to an interpellation, stated that the question of amending or repealing the Deccan Agriculturists Relief Act had been postponed till legislation in connection with agricultural indebtedness recommended by the Royal Agricultural Commission could be taken up. The Government were aware that the Agricultural Commission had expressed the opinion that the operation of the Usurious Loans Act of 1918 had not been successful.

The Council then resumed debate on Syed Munawar's Bill to reduce the number of nominated members by four and give on the Bombay City Corporation four seats to Labour by election. Representation of labour, the Bill stated, should be confined to registered Trade Unions and manual workers employed in trade and industry, and such election to the Corporation should not be direct, but through an electoral college of delegates, elected by such registered Trade Unions.

The Council adopted an amendment to the effect that Labour leaders who were not themselves labourers were not eligible for such election to the Corporation.

On the 1ST OCTOBER Rao Bahadur Kale who along with Rao Bahadur Naik had been deputed by some non-official members of the Council to go to Godhra and ascertain the facts regarding the riot there, rose to make a statement in connection with it.

Mr. Kale observed that if the Government were allowed to make a statement on a public matter official members also should be allowed the same privilege, so that the House might be in a position to hear both sides of the question.

The President emphasised what he considered to be a direct method of dealing with it. It was that any member might legitimately ask questions if what the Home Member stated was likely to be contradicted by some other information, and as there were no rules on that point discretion lay with him.

Mr. K. F. Nariman observed that as the Chair exercised discretion in allowing Government members to read reports, non-officials members should also be allowed the same privilege.

The President said that if one statement were allowed, other members would supplement and contradict it.

Mr. Noor Mahomed and Khan Sahab Mansuri expressed a desire to make statements. The former stated that he had his information from a most unimpeachable authority.

The President then allowed Rao Bahadur Kale's statement to be placed on the Council Table.

Replying to Mr. Amin's question, whether the Government were in a position to verify or contradict the news in "The Bombay Chronicle" regarding the disturbances at Broach, the Home Member said that he had no information on the matter.

#### Supplementary Grant Voted.

A supplementary grant of 25 lakhs for the Lloyd Barrage was then made after the General Member had informed the Council that the grant was examined by the Finance Committee, which had satisfied itself as to the items of expenditure.

Discussion on Syed Munawar's Bill to give labour representation in the Bombay Corporation had not concluded, when the Council rose for the day.

#### Labour Representation In Bombay Corporation.

On the 2ND OCTOBER Syed Munawar's amending Bill to provide representation for Labour in the Bombay Corporation was given three readings and passed.

Mr. Bechar thanked the Government for supporting the Bill, and hoped that they would exhibit the same spirit during the debate on the Maternity Benefit Bill.

#### Separation of Sind.

Mr. Noor Mahomed claimed priority for his resolution regarding the separation of Sind, but the President said that he could not accede to his request though he sympathised with him in view of the importance of the resolution. Leave was then granted to the introduction of several private Bills.

After disposal of some Bills, the Council was prorogued.

# The Madras Legislative Council

The third session of the Madras Legislative Council commenced in Madras on the 3RD SEPTEMBER at 11 a.m. In view of the motion standing in the name of Sir Marjoribanks for the appointment of a committee for co-operation with the Simon Commission there was a record attendance both in the House and in the galleries.

The Hon'ble Sir Marjoribanks moved a resolution recording condolence of the Council at the death of the Rajah of Ramnad. Mr. Satyamurti, Dr. Subbarayan Mr. Arokiaswamy Muddaliar, the Rajah of Panagal and other members associated themselves with the tributes paid by the Leader of the House to the late Rajah. The resolution was passed all standing.

## S. I. Ry. Strike Adjournment Motion.

Mr. Satyamurthy then moved a motion for adjournment of the business of the House to discuss a matter of public importance, viz. the action taken by the Madras Government in the matter of the S. I. Ry. strike. There being no objection the president fixed the next day 2-30 p.m. for discussion of the motion.

## Election to Simon Committee.

The President then read out the Acts that had received assent of the Governor-General and the Governor. The House adopted the motion of Sir Marjoribanks for the election of a House Committee of six members under the Standing Orders of the Council according to the principle of proportional representation by a single transferable vote. The President fixed the next day 3 p.m. for nomination of the personnel of the committee, after which Sir Marjoribank's motion for the election of a committee to co operate with the Simon Commission came up for discussion. The President invited opinions from the members of the House as to why he should or should not give his consent to include the motion in the agenda for the day. His Excellency the Governor watched the proceedings of the House from his special gallery in the Council.

In inviting opinions as regards the matter of inclusion the President explained that there could be no discussion on the merits of the motion, but he had included it provisionally in the agenda.

Mr. Satyamurty raised a point of order that under Standing Order 6, there could be no discussion on a matter not included in the agenda without leave and consent of the President.

The President said that he has powers under the Standing orders to so provisionally include in the agenda a motion which if he gave his consent to would later be included in the agenda.

Sami Venkatachellam Chetty, leader of the opposition, asked why the Government who were responsible for tabling of the motion had not come out with their reasons for giving his (President's) consent. There was no response from the Government benches and the leader of the opposition repeated his question in which others also joined.

Sir Marjoribanks who on rising was greeted with laughter from the opposition benches said that he would give his reasons briefly. A large section of the House were now desirous of re-opening the question and would like to record their vote. He wanted to give the greatest amount of liberty to the members of the house.

Sami Venkatachellam Chetty and Mr. K. B. Venkatramier then spoke pointing out that under the Rules and Standing Orders the President could not give consent to include it in the agenda.

Mr. P. Sivarao said that the resolution passed by the Council earlier was a very elastic resolution. It concerned itself only with, "the Commission as

at present constituted." Mr. Sivarao wanted every latitude to take stock of the situation now. He, therefore, was of opinion that consent should be given by the President.

Messrs. J. A. Saldanha and C. Ramasoyasulu, Swarajists, said that the President should withhold his consent for allowing the motion to be discussed.

Dewan Bahadur Kumarswamy Reddiar, Justicite, said that Swarajists being imbued with the principles of democracy should not be sticklers for technical objections like *Res Judicata*. Broadly speaking, he said that there had been changes made in the procedure of the Commission which would justify discussion on the subject of examining their attitude afresh. He wanted freedom of discussion and speech.

Mr. C. V. Ananthakrishna Iyer, Advocate General, who was then called upon by the President to speak said that the resolution was different from the motion. The resolution was a specific recommendation to the Governor and recommended something to be done by him. The motion wanted the House to do something. He opined that the rule of repetition should be confined only to one session. Instances there were in parliamentary procedure in which a session was prorogued for two days in order to bring for discussion a subject already discussed. This motion was completely different from the resolution and even if the resolution could be barred, the motion could not be barred. For this reason, he said, the motion was in order.

Mr. Satyamurthi speaking next said that the distinction made by the Advocate General between a motion and a resolution was unknown either to parliamentary practice or to the standing orders. He said that the motion before the House was not only substantially the same as passed in January last, but was identically the same. He asked what had happened since January last to justify the discussion on the same subject? He also pointed out that the executive will not suffer an irreparable damage if the motion is not admitted. He also said that the motion was coming from one, who was consistently for co-operation. No attempts were made either in U. P., C. P. or in the Assembly. He appealed to the President as a custodian of the rights of the House to resist any such attempts.

The President then gave his opinion on whether he should or should not give his consent to the inclusion in the agenda. He said that having regard to the present circumstances he would not be justified in withholding his consent. He should give an opportunity for discussion in tabling that motion. He felt that Government were not abusing their privilege.

Sir Marjoribanks then moved :

"That for the purpose of jointly conferring with the Indian Statutory Commission on terms stated in the letter of the chairman of the Commission to His Excellency the Viceroy dated 6th February and in a further announcement made by the Government of India on the 23rd June, this Council do proceed to elect seven representatives in accordance with regulations made by the President under the standing order for the holding of elections by means of a single transferable vote."

Mr. Satyamurthy submitted that the motion was wholly out of order. Firstly on a motion of this kind the member in charge of the department ought to give his consent. The reforms being a central subject, he asked how a member of the provincial executive council can give his consent for introducing this motion. The question of co-operation with the commission was not a department of the local Government, not even the concern of the local government. Secondly, he asked whether the motion was of such character on which the resolution could be moved. According to standing orders no resolution could be moved on that subject and consequently no motion also can be brought forward on these two points. He wanted the president to give a ruling whether the motion was in order. The Council was then adjourned.

On the 4TH SEPTEMBER, after the question time, discussion on the point of order, raised by Mr. Satyamurthy yesterday, was resumed. Mr. Satyamurthy explained that the Local Government could only work the Reforms as an Agent of the Government of India.

Mr. K. R. Karant (Swarajist) said that any other member could move such motion but not the Government member.

After some speakers had spoken, the Advocate-General explained that the major part of the point of order raised was answered yesterday.

The President then gave his ruling on Mr. Satyamurty's point of order whether Sir Norman Marjoribank's motion for electing a committee to co-operate with the Simon Commission was in order. He held that a motion was different from a resolution which is in the nature of specific recommendation to the Governor. The present motion was not a resolution and the Standing Order 65, which barred moving of any resolution on the same subject within a period of one year did not apply to it. On the other hand he held that another Standing Order which was enacted after the change of procedure of the Council giving power to members for bringing motions other than resolutions on matters of general public importance applied to the present motion. According to that Standing Order the motion could not be brought in the same session. He held that this was in consequence with parliamentary procedure.

The President had not finished his ruling when it was 2-30 p.m. and Mr. Satyamurty drew the attention of the President that the House should now discuss the adjournment motion on S. I. Ry. strike. The President then abruptly left off reading his ruling and said "I rule the motion in order."

Mr. Satyamurty then moved his adjournment motion on the S. I. Ry. strike.

Adjournment Motion withdrawn.

Before Mr. Satyamurty had proceeded with his speech, the President pointed out that the two or three points that were referred to by Mr. Satyamurty were not relevant to the adjournment motion.

Mr. Satyamurty said that he would not like to continue and that he was withdrawing his motion.

The President then continued reading his ruling on the Revenue Member's motion which had been dramatically held up by Mr. Satyamurty's reminder that "it was now 2-30 and he wanted to move his adjournment motion on S. I. R. strike." The ruling of the President stating that Sir Norman Marjoribank's motion was in order was received in silence both by official and non-official benches. Discussion was then taken up on the motion.

Amendment Lost.

Mr. Saldanha (Swarajist) moved an amendment to Sir Norman Marjoribank's motion that the question be deferred for consideration till referendum was taken on the subject or the Council was dissolved. Commending his amendment Mr. Saldanha said that the issue had not changed since last January. He wanted that if the Executive wanted to force this motion, they ought to take the opinion of the electorate or he wanted the Council to be dissolved and fresh election held.

Messrs. Anjaneyulu, K. V. R. Swami, Biswanath Das and Madhavan Nair spoke supporting the amendment. It was opposed by Messrs. Arpudawami Odayar and Danial Thomal and Nadar, Independents.

At this stage closure was applied and the amendment of Mr. Saldanha was lost by 76 against 39.

Another Amendment.

Mr. Sivarao then moved his amendment. His amendment was to the effect that the House can elect a committee provided that its members are given absolutely the same status with regard to the examination of witnesses and accessibility to confidential documents and papers and provided also that the committee submit their report to the Council before submitting to the commission.

The motion was seconded by Mr. C. Gopala Menon. The Swarajists opposed the amendment.

The amendment was carried by 72 voting for and 40 against. Government members and the Justices voted in favour of the motion, while the Swarajists and the Independent Nationalists opposed it.

Mr. S. N. Dorai Rajah did not move his amendment for including the names of members of the committee in the motion. Mr. J. A. Saldanha moved amending

that the committee so appointed shall proceed on fundamental basis, that the form of Government to be decided for India shall be a responsible Government in which the executive would be responsible to the legislature with full and plenary powers.

The amendment fell for want of a seconder. It was 4-45 by this time and the Swarajists adopted obstructive tactics. Sami Venkatachellam Chetty moved that the Council do pass on to the next business in the agenda. When a seconder rose it was past five and the leader of the House wanted the debate to continue till 6 p.m. and finish discussion the very day. The Raja of Panagal wanted discussion to continue.

The motion to pass on to the next business was then put and lost by 66 to 35.

#### CONGRESS PARTY'S STATEMENT.

The leader of the Congress Party then made a statement that as the minority party wanted protection from the octopus majority of the Government and the Justice party it was legitimate on the part of the opposition to obstruct. The excuse ought not to be taken of their opposition, but the Government should allow the fullest discussion. He wanted the President to protect the rights and privileges of the opposition and not throw his weight on the Government side.

The President—I do not agree with the opposition. The discussion shall continue.

The Swarajists and the Independent Nationalists then walked out in a body crying towards Government benches "pass the motion and have it all your own way." Only Mr. K. R. Venkatramier of the Independent Nationalists remained. Discussion was continued and the Raja of Panagal explained his party's position towards the motion. He said that there had been a change in the procedure which merited consideration. He paid tribute to the All-Parties report and asked how else could they ensure the adoption of those recommendations than by co-operating. He wanted the committee to be elected.

Mr. K. R. Venkatramier then made a statement and asked the President to adjourn the discussion. He said that proceedings had been instituted in the High Court calling into question the admissibility of the motion of Sir Marjoribanks and he would characterise it as a gross impropriety if the House should rush on with the debate after half past five and be anxious to close the discussion.

The President interrupted him and said that the House need not take notice of anything that was going on outside the Council.

Hearing this ruling Mr. K. R. Venkatramier also walked out and the motion of Sir Marjoribanks for the election of a committee for the purpose of jointly conferring with the Simon Commission as amended by Mr. P. Sivrarao was carried. The House then adjourned.

#### A Tug-of War.

Automatically with the giving of the President's ruling on this day the scene of interest shifted from the Council room to the court hall. The dramatic way in which the President was held up in the midst of his ruling and the persistent interruptions from the Chair to Mr. Satyamurty while the latter was speaking on his S. I Ry. strike adjournment motion leading to the abandonment of the motion were some of the indications of an excitement that had reached its climax. Meanwhile in the lobby, tidings were awaited with eager interest of the proceedings in the court. When finally it became known that arguments would not be finished on the day there began a silent tug-of-war between the Government and the Justice parties on the one hand and the Congress and the Independent parties on the other, the former pressing to finish discussion on the Simon Commission on that day and the latter pulling the other way to postpone further proceedings on the motion till the court had given its decision. Members on the Government and ministerial benches refrained from taking part in the debates, the amendments at the same time moving for frequent closures. Congress benches demanded polls in every closure motion and on every amendment. The hurry of the Government to come to a decision before the evening in view of the fact that next day and the day after, after which the meeting will be adjourned



to October, are non-official days was matched by dilatoriness on the part of the opposition. At 4.45, Government had proceeded far ahead and the motion ought to have been carried within 5 o'clock but the leader of the opposition moved, under standing order 31, that they do pass on to business next in the agenda. The closure was applied and carried leading to the Congress party walking out. The Council then took barely 10 minutes to finish discussion.

On the 5TH SEPTEMBER after question time the President announced that nominations should be made at 11 a.m. the next day for election to the committee for co-operation with the Simon Commission. Various bills were then taken up.

On the motion of Mr. B. Muniswami Naidu subjects 1-8 on the agenda relating to the Andhra University Amendment Bills were postponed to another sitting.

Other bills amending the District Municipalities Act, the Madras Local Boards Act, the Madras City Municipal Act and others were then allowed leave to be moved and introduced.

The bill for suppression of brothels and immoral traffic was introduced by Mr. K. R. Venkatrama Iyer.

Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi introduced a bill to amend the Madras Hindu Religious Endowments Act.

Discussion then commenced on the resolution of Mr. Karant, the South Karana Member, for election of a committee to enquire into the grievances of ryots of forest areas. While speaking on the motion Mr. J. A. Saldanha warned that there was a contingency of ryots of Kanara starting another Bardoli Satyagraha movement if their grievances were unredressed. While discussion was proceeding on the resolution the Council adjourned.

#### Chloroform Deaths in Hospital.

On the 6TH SEPTEMBER considerable liveliness characterised the proceedings of the Council when the Swarajists inflicted two defeats on Government. When the Council reassembled after lunch Dr. B. B. Malliyya moved an adjournment motion regarding too frequent deaths of late, of patients under chloroform on the table in the general hospital. He specially referred to a number of cases and charged the Government that they were transferring senior and experienced men and putting junior surgeons in charge of anaesthetics. He also said that chloroform and anaesthetics used in hospitals were very inferior stuff. Mr. Abdul Hamid Khan seconded the motion.

Mr. Argudasami Udayar opposed on the ground that the motion would mean a public scare and that patients would lose confidence in the hospital authorities.

Messrs. Anjaneyulu and Bakthavatsalu Naidu supported the motion. Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi suggested that they should send for men for training in the administration of anaesthetics abroad. The Hon'ble Mr. Muthayya Mudaliar, minister of public health, in reply stated that the hospital authorities were using the best stuff of chloroform. He asked how junior men could gain experience if not put in charge.

Dr. Reddi interrupted saying that they should do it under the supervision of senior surgeons. Mr. Mudaliar continued that Government would consider any suggestions for minimising the deaths under chloroform, but pleaded that the cases cited should not be treated as due to negligence or incompetence of the medical authorities.

Mr. Karant (Swarajist) said that if such a thing had occurred the minister in charge would be thrown out.

Mr. Muthayya Mudaliar on hearing this left the chamber and returned at the division. The Swarajists applied the closure and carried the motion by 44 to 39.

#### Police And Unruly Mobs.

The resolution of Mr. Dorairajah for supplying water-hoses and tear bombs to the police for lessening the chances of opening fire on unruly and riotous mobs was then taken up. An interesting fate was in store for this motion as the Swarajists opposed this resolution.

Mr. Harisarvotthama Rao (Swarajist) opposed that it was the tyrannous mentality of the police that ought to be changed and there was no use bringing trivial charges.

Sir Md. Usman, Home Member, said that water hoses was impracticable but tear bombs were being used in Shanghai and that he would examine the question.

The mover of the resolution criticised the Swarajists who always professed to work for independence, not coming to his help when he wanted to do something for the people. He then proceeded to say that in view of the Home Member's remarks he would withdraw the motion, but the President refused the permission as no member, who had availed himself of the right of reply could withdraw. The motion was forced to vote, 4 voted for and 59 against, Government members voting with the Swarajists.

Government suffered a second defeat this day on the resolution of Dr. Mallayya to appoint a non-official committee to enquire into the large number of suspensions, dismissals and fines of the government press employees of late. It was five before discussion could be finished, but the Swarajists obtained the permission of the president to continue till 5-30, and carried the resolution by 44 against 24.

#### The Carnatic Paper Mills.

The adjournment notice fixed for this afternoon on the question of recent negotiations instituted by Government with regard to the Carnatic Paper Mills at Rajahmundry was then taken up. There was keen discussion on this motion and ultimately Government was defeated. Mr. K. V. R. Swami (Swarajist) who moved the motion charged Government with indifference towards the paper mills. It was stated that a European firm was negotiating with Government for purchasing Government's right in the mills. If the Government could not find money for this small industry, he asked, how could they finance a big one. If Government's intention was not to ruin the industry he wanted it to put more money instead of transferring their right.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Ramasoyasulu.

The Development Minister, Mr. Sethurathnam Iyer, said that the Finance Minister would speak for him. The Swarajists took an objection to this procedure.

The President said that as a special case the Finance Member could be allowed to speak for the Development Minister.

Mr. Moir repudiated the charge of indifference and said that Government were desirous of helping the industry. Government could not undertake the concern as it was found impracticable and he said that all talk of starting the industry was amateurish. He challenged the opposition to take the industry and make it a success as it is.

Mr. C. V. Venkataraman Iyengar who then followed made an effective speech in which he said that Government was ruining the industry by selling its right for four and half lakhs. What the industry lacked was a working capital. Why should not Government make a contribution for that? If Government were not indifferent, why did they not adopt the recommendations of the Tariff Board with regard to the industry.

The closure was moved and carried by the Swarajists, and the adjournment motion was declared carried by 40 votes against 30. The Justices with the exception of two remained neutral.

Discussion was then proceeded with the resolution of Mr. Karant to appoint a committee to enquire into the grievances of the ryots in forest areas. Discussion was adjourned till the 8th Sept.

#### The Madras Committee.

The following seven members were elected by the Legislative Council to the Provincial Committee to jointly confer with the Statutory Commission :—

Dewan Bahadur Kumara Swami Reddi; Kumar Raja of Venkatagiri, Sir A. P. Patro; Khan Bahadur Khalifalla Sahib; Mr. Daniel Thomas; Mr. P. Shivarao and Mr. N. Sivaraj.

On the 8TH SEPTEMBER the Council re-assembled later than usual for want of a quorum on account of Swarajist hesitation before entering the Chamber. The House was first addressed by the Swaraj party leader after the necessary quorum had been secured by the Ministerialists. He declared that, owing to the expeditious disposal of the Simon Committee debate, the House had no opportunity to fully express its views.

The President, replying, referred to the Standing Orders vesting full discretion in him. If the opposition were dissatisfied, they might amend the Standing Orders.

#### Madras University Bill.

The Chief Minister's motion to refer the University Bill to a select committee was agreed to in spite of opposition. Defending the Bill, Dr. Subbarayan pleaded that the University was the first of its kind, and should be supported only because it proposed to foster Tamil literature and culture.

After agreeing to several grants, the House adjourned until October 8.

#### Seizure of Bharathi's Songs.

On the 8TH OCTOBER, after question time, Mr. Satyamurty moved to adjourn business of the House for discussing the situation created by the seizure of Bharathi's songs. The President pointed out that the matter was subjudice. Mr. Satyamurty explained that he wanted to discuss the action of the Government of Madras in having given effect to the order of forfeiture issued by the Burma Government. This had nothing to do with the main question of order of forfeiture which alone was appealable to the High Court.

The President said that if the House was going to discuss whether the songs were seditious or not, then they were clearly precluded from discussing.

Mr. Satyamurty pointed out that the Government were not bound to carry out the orders of the Burma Government and that he could discuss the action of the Government.

The Law Member opposed the motion and said that he could not understand how they could discuss the action of the Government without getting into the question of the seditious nature of the songs.

The Advocate General also opposed the motion. The President ruled the motion in order if Mr. Satyamurty would not refer to whether the songs were seditious or not. Next day 2-30 p.m. was fixed for discussion of the motion.

#### Supplementary Grants.

Dr. Subbarayan then moved for a supplementary grant of Rs. 4,000 for the grant of an honorarium to the authors of the book, "The birds of South India." The Director of Public Instruction had recommended that the authors, Mr. Inglis and Col. Baker may be given an honorarium and the book printed and published by Government.

Mr. Naganna moved to reduce the allotment by Rs. 100.

The amendment was supported by the Swarajists on the ground that the book would not find sale and would be useless to agriculturists. Moreover the book was proposed to be priced at Rs. 15, a price far beyond the reach of any agriculturist.

The amendment was defeated by 42 to 45 votes and the grant was sanctioned.

The Council sanctioned the supplementary grant of Rs. 700 moved by Hon Mr. Muthiah Mudaliar, Minister for Public Health, to provide for a contribution towards expenditure connected with the appointment of a Commissioner of medical qualifications.

Then the Chief Minister, in the absence of the Minister for Development, moved that a supplementary grant of Rs. 14,300 be granted to provide for the construction of a building for the Lady Amphilil Government Secondary School for Girls at Masulipatnam and it was also sanctioned.

#### Court Fees Act Amend.

Then Dewan Bahadur Krishnan Nair, Law Member, introduced a Bill further to amend the Court Fees Act 1870 and moved that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee composed of fourteen members. The Swarajists opposed it and said that the people would suffer if the amending Bill was passed. The debate was not closed when the Council rose for the day.

On the 9TH OCTOBER the house took up for consideration the Bill further to amend the Court Fees Act of 1870 moved by Dewan Bahadur Krishnan Nair, Law Member, yesterday and some Swarajist members criticised the Bill.

The Law Member, in replying to the debate, said that all the valuable suggestions made by the members in course of the debate would be carefully considered in the Select Committee, and his motion was carried.

Dr. Subbarayan, Chief Minister, then presented the report of the Select Committee appointed to consider the Bill to amend the Madras University Act of 1923 and moved that the Bill as amended by the Select Committee, be taken into consideration. It was carried by a majority.

The house then considered amendments to the Bill given notice of by members. Discussion on amendments was not over when the Council rose for lunch.

## Seizure of Bharathi's Songs.

After lunch the House discussed Mr. Satyamurthy's adjournment motion on the action of Government in seizing "Bharathi's songs. The motion was carried amidst scenes of great excitement. The ministers remained neutral and only the Executive Council members and Government secretaries and two nominated members numbering in all 12 stood up against the adjournment motion. The entire Justice and Congress blocks with about a dozen ministerialists numbering 76 carried the motion amidst shouts of "Vandemataram". Two of the Congress members began to sing some of the songs in the Council Chamber and a large crowd was attracted to the galleries.

Punctually at 2-30 p.m. Mr. Satyamurthy moved his motion. He said that only some time ago the Chief Minister had said that he would introduce these same songs in schools but now the Law Member had proscribed them under the order of the Burma Government. He asked—was it just that Government should strike at the subsistence of the poor widow and the daughter of Subramania Bharathi who were living on the sale proceeds of the book? "I wish I had the voice to sing the songs here to-day to make Government remove the ban on the book" he said. "Born in a free country Bharathi would have been honoured as a Poet Laureate but in ours his poems have come to be proscribed." He asked the elected members not to allow the Government to lay its hands on Tamil literature.

Mr. Muthuranga Mudaliar in seconding said that Bharathi was the national poet of the Tamils. Mr. Chavadi Subramania Pillai asked whether the Madras Government were the executors of the Burma Government.

Mr. N. Sivaraj, nominated member, took objection to the reference made by Mr. Satyamurthy to the elected members and said that in this instance they were at one with the other non-officials in calling for an explanation from Government.

Messrs. T. O. Srinivasa Iyengar and Chidambaranatha Mudaliar, Tamil scholars, claimed that Bharathi's songs should not be touched. Many more including the nominated members took part and urged that the Law Member should accede to the wishes of the House and withdraw the order.

Mr. Krishnan Nair, Law Member, stated that there was nothing sinister in Government's action. The plain facts were that the Burma Government had published a notification proscribing the book and the Madras Government, according to the rule of the Government of India, had republished it.

Continuing, Mr. Nair defended the action of the police in applying for warrant and said that they could not question the publication in the gazette. He said that the case was before the High Court and if it was decided that the songs were seditious then the Government could not be blamed, and if it decided otherwise, well, order would automatically go.

Mr. T. M. Narayanaswami Pillai pointed out that the Government need not wait for the High Court to decide but could themselves cancel the order.

Closure was then applied for and the motion was carried by 76 to 12 votes.

On the 10TH OCTOBER the Chief Minister announced that the Government Bill to amend the Madras Local Boards Act providing for the abolition of nomination and the reservation of seats, would be introduced at next session.

## Suppression of Immoral Traffic.

Mr. Venkatarama Iyer's motion referring his Bill for the suppression of brothels to a Select Committee was ruled out at first as the mover read out more names for the Select Committee than he had notified. Later, the mover expressed regret for not having given notice of additional names, whereupon the President allowed his motion.

An attempt was made in this Bill to deal with commercialised vice. Power was taken for the suppression of brothels, for the rescue, protection and custody of young girls, for punishing men and women participating in this vice for gain. Power was given to police officers to enter and search premises and effect arrests in certain contingencies.

Regarding the scope of the Act, it was felt that it would be advisable to confine its operations presently in Madras City, authorising the Government to extend it to the mofussil on the application of the local bodies concerned. The discussion was not over when the Council rose for the day.

Mrs. Mathulakshmi's Bill amending the Hindu Religious Endowment Act for the abolition of the Devadasi system was referred to a Select Committee.

## Annamalai University Bill Presented.

On the 11TH OCTOBER, after question time, Dr. Subbarayan, Chief Minister, presented the report of the Select Committee on Annamalai University Bill and moved

that the Bill, as amended by the Select Committee, be taken into consideration and this was carried. The House then considered the various amendments to the Bill given notice of by members. While the House was discussing about the amendments Mr. Saldanha moved that discussion on this Bill be adjourned for three months but the motion was lost. The House then proceeded to consider the various amendments and the discussion had not finished when the Council rose.

On the 12TH OCTOBER Clauses 15 to 38 of the Bill were considered and passed with only slight amendments. The clauses relate to the constitution of a Senate, Syndicate, Academic Council, Finance Committee and their respective powers in the University. Then amidst general cheers the Council passed into law the Bill on the motion of the Chief Minister.

Mr. S. Sa'yamurthi, member for the University, seconding, thanked Sir Annamalai Chettier for his magnificent donation and the Madras Government for their generous grant. He hoped Chidambaram would prove to be the Oxford of South India.

Mr. T. E. Moir, Finance Member, pointed out that the constitution of the University was democratic as it conferred benefits on all classes. The Raja of Panagal said that the scheme was an epoch-making one and a magnificent instance of private enterprise. If others followed Sir Annamalai's example India could lift her head high among nations.

The Council next referred the Bill for the Suppression of Immoral Traffic to a Select Committee and adjourned until November 26.

On the 27TH NOVEMBER the Select Committee report on Mr. Karant's Jain Succession Bill was presented and passed into law. Further consideration of the Madras Abkari Act Amending Bill was put off to the next non-official day.

Mr. Kaleswara Rao's Madras District Municipality Act Amending Bill evoked considerable liveliness. The Chief Minister opposed the motion on the ground that he himself was going to bring a similar motion. The motion ultimately divided sharply and was carried by 47 against 46 votes amidst cries of "resign, shame."

A lively debate took place in the afternoon when Sami Venkatachalam Chetty, leader of the Congress party, moved his adjournment motion regarding the recent selection of officers in the registration department for higher posts on communal basis. The Nationalist members as a whole deprecated the policy of introducing communal representation in public services and clearly enumerated the evil effects of the policy. They said that if communal considerations were allowed to prevail in making promotions from one grade to another, the officers would feel no inducement to work efficiently and think that honesty would not pay much, thus resulting in the efficiency of the administration being impaired. Members of other parties strongly defended communal representation in all departments of public services and pleaded in the name of fairness and justice to give equal opportunities to all communities. The motion was ultimately talked out.

On the 28TH NOVEMBER, during question time, Mr. Sa'yamurthi asked whether the Government proposed to lead oral evidence before the Simon Commission either by or on behalf of the Ministers. The Revenue Member replying stated that the Government had come to no decision on the point.

In reply to another question whether the members elected by the Council for conferring with the Simon Commission had asked for a grant of special allowances and whether their request had been granted, it was stated that the Committee asked them that they should receive the same scale of emoluments and travelling allowances as the Indian Central Committee and the Chief Secretary had replied that the conditions under which the Nair Committee had been appointed were quite different from those applicable to the provincial committee, and the provincial committee members should get allowances ordinarily admissible to M. L. C.'s when employed on work of committees so appointed.

The Council then took into consideration the resolution of Mr. Bheemayya recommending the appointment of a mixed committee of officials and non-officials to enquire into the economic conditions of the Kistna and Godavari districts and that pending said enquiries the resettlement scheme report of the Kistna and Godavari districts be held in abeyance. Mr. Harisarvothama Rao seconding the resolution explained the bad economic condition of the ryots in the districts and stressed the need for appointing a Committee to go into them.

Next day, the 29TH NOVEMBER, the Council proceeded with the discussion of amendments to the Bill to amend the Madras University Act. The Bill was put to the vote clause by clause and necessary amendments were made. The amending Bill, as amended by the Council, was then put to vote as a whole and was carried. The House then adjourned till January 1929.

# The U. P. Legislative Council.

## Election to Simon Commission.

The autumn session of the United Provinces Legislative Council commenced at Naini Tal on the 17TH SEPTEMBER 1928 under the presidency of Rai Bahadur Lala Sitaram. There was a good attendance of members as the resolution regarding the formation of a Committee to co-operate with the Simon Commission was to come up on this day. The Council had carried a resolution to leave the Simon Commission severely alone in February last by 56 votes against 55. On this occasion, however, Government whips have been very busy and it was apprehended that the resolution recommending the formation of a committee to co-operate with the Simon Commission would be carried when the debate will begin the next day.

Deliberations at the All-Parties Conference, Lucknow had alienated most of the Muslim members who decided to walk in a solid phalanx in the Government lobby.

One interesting feature of the day's proceedings was loud cheering by members when Rai Rajeshwar Bali and Kumar Rajendra Singh who were forced to resign on the Simon Commission issue took their seats on the opposition benches by the side of Mr. Chintamani, the Nationalist leader.

When Raja Jagannath Buksh Singh, the present Minister of Education and ex-Deputy Leader of the Nationalist party, rose to answer a question, he was greeted with contemptuous jeering and cries of 'shame.'

After question time, Mr. Lambert, Finance Member in a well-phrased speech referred to the death of Sir Alexander Muddiman, Chaudhari Majid Hussain, Director of Industries and Syed Amir Ali and paid glowing tributes to their qualities of head and heart. He was followed by Mr. Chintamani, Nawab Ahmed Said Khan, Home member, Mr. Govind Ballabh Pant, Swarajist leader and others.

The Hon'ble Lala Sitaram cut short the proceedings by associating the Chair in paying a glowing tribute to the memories of the three illustrious personages and promised that he would send copies of the proceedings to the members of the bereaved families.

Mr. Chintamani next moved the adjournment of the House as a mark of respect to the memory of Sir Alexander Muddiman. As no objection was raised the President adjourned the Council till next day.

On the 18TH SEPTEMBER, just before the Finance Member's motion that the Council do elect a committee of seven non-official members to take part in the joint conference of the Statutory Commission was put, Mr. C. Y. Chintamani, on behalf of the Nationalists, and Mr. G. B. Pant on behalf of the Swarajists, made statements to the effect that their parties had decided to take no part whatsoever in the discussion on this motion on various grounds.

Swarajists and Nationalists all left the chamber and the co-operation motion was put and adopted *nem con.* After their exodus there was a little discussion on the motion.

## Mr. Chintamani's Statement.

Immediately after question time the President called upon Mr. Chintamani, the Nationalist leader who rose to make a statement on behalf of his party. He objected most strongly to the procedure that was being followed by Government in coming forward with a motion regarding the formation of a committee to co-operate with the Simon Commission before the Council. This was the latest indication of the attitude of the studied, deliberate and aggressive contempt towards the Council of which the Government of the U. P. had been guilty in connection with the Statutory Commission. On February last the Council had adopted a resolution to have nothing to do with the Commission as constituted in any stage and in any form after a full dress debate in which Government and the opposition had full opportunity to present their case. Government showed immediately afterwards what respect it had for the decisions of the Council and to what extent it was going to abide by its verdict. The Minister whose attitude towards the resolution was hopelessly out of harmony with the feelings and wishes of the Council was retained in office (cries of shame) whereas the senior Minister and his colleague who

respected the opinions of the Council by remaining neutral on the occasion were sacrificed on the altar of an alien bureaucratic petty expediency (cries of shame). Government having acted with constitutional impropriety had since surrounded themselves by colleagues who whether they would or would not administer departments over which they nominally exercised control, would certainly administer to the wants, requirements and wishes of the Governor in Council. The resolution of February stood still in the journals of the House. It had been neither rescinded nor reconsidered. The Governor in Council wants to set it at naught and it was because under the standing orders they could not make any motion on the same subject until after the expiry of six months, they deliberately of set purpose with interested motives did not call the session of the Council at the usual time, but called it at the present time when six months had expired. If they had even a whit of respect for the Council the motion which should have been tabled would be that the House do reconsider or rescind its resolution of February and if they had got the verdict of the Council in their favour on that motion, then as a corollary to that, they could have moved that the Council should proceed to the election of a Committee. But the story was otherwise. Just as no leopard can change its spots, so this Government cannot change its bureaucratic skin. They had, therefore, acted as if there had been no discussion on the subject in the Council, as if the latter had not given its verdict. They had simply ignored the existence of that resolution. They wanted that the Council should be reduced to the position of an agent gently, meekly, humbly and obediently to carry out the decrees of the Governor in Council. They on that side of the House were such unregenerates that they were not willing either to recognise, or to act in obedience to the mandates of the superior wisdom of those who sat on the wrong side of the chair. On the present occasion the speaker and members of his party decline the Finance Member's invitation to elect this committee without respect, without regret and without an apology, because Government's conduct towards the Council and towards the country whose enlightened and representative opinion the Council faithfully recorded in February does not deserve pardon for the past, or applause for the present or confidence for the future. They decline to take any part whatsoever in the discussion that would follow upon this motion. They shall have nothing to do with it. It was all a question of tactics. On that point Mr. Chintamani told the Government what Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman said of the Government of Balfour in England —

"Tactics, tactics on tactics, you live by your tactics, you will perish."

#### Mr. G. B. Pant's Statement.

Mr. Govind Ballabh Pant, Swarajist leader, followed Mr. Chintamani. He said that it would be best in the interests of all concerned if they dissociated themselves from the motion which was to be moved by the Finance Member. No other course was open for them when Government did not pay the slightest heed to their resolutions. They had once after full dress debate resolved that they would have nothing to do with the Commission in any stage or any form. Now they were being asked to throw that resolution into a waste paper basket. He had no doubt that the country was against the Commission. He was convinced that the majority of the members of the Council were against the Commission. He was sure that if a referendum had been made the country would have given its verdict against the Commission. The result of the two recent bye-elections in the United Provinces proved his statement. The Minister of Local Self-Government had used all his resources and strained every nerve to defeat the Nationalist candidates, but his own candidates lost at polls with an overwhelming majority. If he did not take any part in the deliberations of the Council that day it was because he considered it a waste of time and very improper course to reopen a question of which the Council had given its verdict before after a due and deliberate consideration. Even if they threw out the motion against Government, the Government would go on bringing forward such motions again and again until they had bribed, cajoled, intimidated or otherwise forced the members of the House to submit and succumb to those corrupting influences which often emanate from them. He protested against the objectionable, if not mean, methods adopted by Government. He cited the case of the Assembly where Government was going to nominate members to the committee. Government would do the same thing here, so there was no use wasting their time in futile controversy over the motion. He felt that in the circumstances when all the present constitutional methods had been thrown to winds, there could be only one ideal, noble and glorious ideal of independence for this great country. They could not think of anything else; they had to live and die for that and for them those little juggling in the form of commissions and committees had little meaning. The hypocrisy of Government was patent. They had been talking every day of the unfitness of the Indians to frame any constitution. The moment the Nehru

Committee's report was out and received the seal of approval of the All-Parties Conference a campaign of calumny and ridicule was launched against it. Every device was being adopted to pooh pooh it in order to show that Indians were not fit to do anything which was fit to be considered. They knew the history of Ireland, Canada, United States of America and South Africa. Nowhere had the Britishers yielded until forced to do so. They would work for the freedom of their country by those ways and means which would succeed in India in vindicating the honour of their motherland and restoring the prestige of their nation.

After this the Nationalists and Swarajists walked out of the chamber in a body together with a few cross benchers. The Swarajists were in their full strength, but there were many absentees from amongst the Nationalists.

Mr. LAMBERT, Finance Member, next moved that the Council do elect during the present session a Committee consisting of 7 non-official members to take part in the joint Conference of the Indian Statutory Commission. He said that the issue was of simple and practical politics. The Council was being asked to elect a committee to sit with the Commission. The only motive for refusing to do so was so far as he was aware was based on the disapproval of the constitution of the Commission. This was the attitude which he had no difficulty in understanding and which he did not wish to decry. But even if he were to avow that he sympathised with it, he still could not see that in a case like that it fully justified the boycott. The policy of boycott was a barren policy, a policy of negation leading to no definable goal.

Khan Bahadur Shaikh Habibullah, who had remained neutral when the boycott resolution was carried in February, said that he would have walked out with others had he approved of the constitution framed by the Nehru Committee. But it was so imperfect and idealistic and proposed such absurd franchise that he could not accept it. He was for getting as much as possible by co-operating with the Commission and if they stooped they only stooped to conquer.

Raja Kushalpal Singh next supported the motion. The motion for closure was moved and accepted and the Council then adjourned.

#### No-Confidence in Minister.

On the 19TH SEPTEMBER, being the official day allotted for discussion of supplementary estimates, proceedings were not expected to be lively and interesting. But immediately after question time the Hon'ble Lala Sitaram, the President, announced, that Mr. Chintamani, the Nationalist Leader had handed him the following notice: "Under rule 12A of the United Provinces Legislative Council Rules I hereby give notice that I wish to make a motion that this Council has no confidence in the present Minister of Education, Raja Jagannath Buxh Singh".

The President held the motion in order and asked the House if Mr. Chintamani had their leave to make the motion. The President said that if forty members rose from their seats, leave to make the no-confidence motion would be granted.

After the President's announcement 47 members consisting of the entire opposition and many cross benchers got up. The President announced that the requisite number of members having got up Mr. Chintamani had leave of the House to make the motion and fixed Saturday, September 22nd, for the discussion immediately after question time.

It must be remembered here that Raja Jagannath Buxh Singh was till lately the Leader of the Nationalist Party and an uncompromising critic of the Government and an active member of the opposition. When the late Sir Alexander Muddiman forced Rai Rajeswar Bali and Kumar Rajendra Singh, Ministers, to resign as they refused to send the Local Government's report to the Secretary of the Simon Commission under their signatures, Raja Jagannath Buxh Singh was won over to accept the port-folio of education. This unexpected somersault on his part had enraged his quondam colleagues and he had been treacherantly criticised in the press and public platforms of the United Provinces. The present "no confidence motion" is a sequel to the indignation caused by this sudden action.

The rest of day was devoted to discussion of supplementary estimates after which the House adjourned.

On the 20TH SEPTEMBER the agricultural position of the United Provinces and the inadequacy of the rains were discussed in connection with the supplementary demand for twenty lakhs for advances to the cultivators. Government explained that the rains were deficient in most places, particularly in Allahabad, Agra, Jhansi and Meerut Divisions. The agricultural situation was uncertain and much depended



on the monsoon during September. In any case the demand for agricultural loans was likely to be great.

The Council voted the amount, in addition to an aggregate of eleven lakhs for the Ramganga Hydro-Electric Scheme, the Roorkee-Bhola Electricity Scheme, and the Roorkee-Sharanpur Electric Extension Scheme.

Government expected a twelve percent return from the capital outlay on these Schemes.

### Members of Simon Committee.

Immediately after question time the President announced the names of seven non-official members who had been nominated by the Council in response to the Finance Member's invitation asking the House to elect a Committee to sit with the Simon Commission during its sitting in the United Provinces. The seven members were:

- (1) Mr. J. P. Srivastava of the Upper India Chamber of Commerce,
- (2) Mr. Desanges, representative of the Anglo-Indians,
- (3) Mr. Ram Charan, the Depressed Class representative,
- (4) Dr. Shafaat Ahmed Khan,
- (5) Mr. Hidayat Husain,
- (6) Raja Kushalpal Singh and,
- (7) Mr. Bisheshwar Dayal Seth from amongst the landed magnates of the province.

The President announced that as seven nominations had been made by the Council, election was unnecessary. The announcement of names was received with cries of 'shame' 'shame' from the Opposition benches.

Before adjourning for lunch the Council discussed some supplementary estimates.

After lunch time, the usually dull debate on the supplementary estimates became interesting on Government motion asking the Council to vote Rs. 50,000 for the expenses of the Jails Enquiry Committee, recently appointed by the Government.

The personnel of the Committee consisting of Sir Louis Stuart, Chief Judge, Oudh Chief Court, Pandit Jagat Narain, ex-Minister and Government counsel in the Kakori Train Dacoity Case and Mr. Hidayat Hussain, member of the Council, had been vigorously criticised in the press of the province.

The members of the Opposition Party had given motions for reduction by various amounts including the total omission of the demand. They criticised the constitution of the Committee as its Chairman was a reactionary Civilian and one of its members a communal leader and a habitual supporter of Government and the other an old man who was Government's counsel in the Kakori Case. There was no Congressman on the Committee who had the experience of jail life and no member from the opposition.

The Home Member replied to the debate. The amendments were then put to vote and lost. The original demand was then voted and the House adjourned.

### The No-Confidence Motion.

On the 22ND SEPTEMBER an atmosphere of tense excitement prevailed in the House when it discussed Mr. Chintamani's motion of no-confidence on Raja Jagannath Baksh Singh, Education Minister. There was an attendance of 112 members of the total strength of 122 and the visitors' galleries were literally packed and a number of people waited outside for want of accommodation.

After question time the President asked the Nationalist Leader to make his motion. In doing so Mr. Chintamani said that this was the first time that a motion of that nature was being made in the Legislative Council of these provinces ever since the present system of Government came into being more than seven years ago and it was a matter of extreme regret to him that it fell on him as an unavoidable public duty to bring forward the motion against his erstwhile colleague and Deputy. It was not a domestic or public party squabble that actuated him to give notice of the motion but only consideration of interests as they understood it. For sometime past there was one public question which absorbed the public mind to the exclusion of any other subject and that was the Indian Statutory Commission. A great deal of public feeling was aroused in the whole country and it was made manifest in a manner as unmistakable and as emphatic as public opinion could be that the intelligent and public spirited articulate section of the population of the country will have nothing to do with it in any stage or in any form. Raja Jagannath Baksh Singh was till recently a vigorous opponent of the Commission. He was their Deputy leader. He moved the resolution of boycott in a big Lucknow meeting presided over by Sir Rampal Singh when he quoted Tulsidas to the effect that we might lose our life but should stick to our word. Subsequently on the occasion of the debate on the boycott of the Simon Commission on 15th February he was one of their warmest supporters. There was none in the Council

to whom success of the resolution was more due and who exerted himself up to the last moment than the Education Minister on his last incarnation. After this brilliant record, his acceptance of office was a volte face, a complete somersault. After assuming office, the Minister of Education issued a statement to the press on June 30th. After he had declared himself as boycotter, he had exchanged views with the members of the British India Association of Oudh who are his constituency and he was led to the conclusion that it was not in the interests of either of the Taluqdars or of the country at large that they should persist in the boycott policy. This was merely a camouflage. He asked the House whether the Raja had not sacrificed a very remunerative position of the Deputy Leader of the Nationalist Party and penalised himself for his previous mistake by accepting profitableless, pleasureless, obscure, uncoveted and unenvied position of a Minister. The issue was not the propriety or correctness or impropriety or incorrectness of one's attitude towards the Simon Commission. The issue was to purge public life of the provinces by expressing their emphatic disapprobation of the action of the Education Minister so that public men might not launch into such somersaults with impunity.

#### Minister's Defence.

In defending himself, Raja Jagannath Baksh Singh, Education Minister, said that he had great regard for Mr. Chintamani who had condemned his acceptance of office of Minister. He could not rival him in his richness of language and expression. The Minister declared that he had put several supplementary questions regarding the two ex-Ministers on their attitude towards the Simon Commission not out of any malice, but only to clarify the issue. Further, when he had resigned membership of the Nationalist Party, it was not in expectation by anybody that the two Ministers would ever be asked to resign. He had changed his views regarding the boycott of the Commission as he later on took stock of the position and thought that landlords would suffer by such a policy. The opinion, in the House had also veered round because the Committee to sit with the Simon Commission had been set up. (Cries of "Not by us, but by Government").

Regarding the change of his political opinion he said that he did not stand alone. Bigger persons had done it in different countries at different times.

Kunwar Jagdish PRASAD, Chief Secy, said that the issue was whether the Education Minister's conduct was in accordance with public standards or whether public opinion condemned it. Public opinion was always elusive. Taking it for granted that the Swarajists represented public opinion, what were the phases since the Reforms in 1921? Swarajists at first favoured boycott of Councils. They then entered to obstruct and they were still in the legislatures of the country. To-day they favoured a boycott of the Commission, but tomorrow public opinion might change in its favour. The speaker wanted to know why the motion was against one of the three Ministers, when, according to Swarajist political dietary, it was essential that they should gobble the whole bunch. Where was the Nationalists' faith in the joint responsibility of the Ministers? Its tactics were of the worst kind, sponsored by Nationalists, aided by Swarajists and supported by a few disappointed cross-benchers. The issue was whether there should be a stable ministry, whether there should be no Ministry or whether the ministry should be subservient and servile to the opposition. The Chief Secretary warned the landlords against the motion which aimed at the downfall of the landlord Ministry.

Members divided on the motion and the result of the division was a tie 57, voting either way. Two of the members who were absent in the morning had come later.

The President in giving his casting vote observed that had the Minister himself, at whom the vote of censure was aimed, not voted against the resolution the motion would have been carried. That showed that the House was in favour of the vote of no-confidence. He accordingly gave his casting vote for the motion and declared it carried. The result was received with a thundering applause from the opposition benches and in a way a pandemonium reigned supreme for some time. The Council then adjourned till the 24th.

On the 24TH SEPTEMBER non-official members were surprised to find Raja Jagannath Baksh Singh, Minister of Education still occupying his seat among the Government benches in spite of the vote of no confidence passed on him on Saturday. He also answered questions relating to his departments during the question time.

Mr. Chintamani, leader of the Nationalist party, asked: "I rise to ask the Hon'ble Finance Member to make a statement on the intention of the Government in consequence of the vote of this Council on Saturday in regard to the Minister of Education."

The President observed: "That can be answered if the member to whom the question is addressed consents to do that. Under proviso of the standing order number 29, the President may with the consent of the member to whom the question is addressed allow

it to be put with short notice. If the Finance Member is ready to answer, I have no objection."

Mr. Lambert, Finance Member, replied: "I have no objection saying that the question is not one for Government. The question is one between His Excellency the Governor and the Minister. But I should like to point out that it is not unreasonable that there should be interval after a vote of this type and its final consequences. There should be a little patience and events will disclose themselves. The fact that the Hon'ble Minister is present on this side of the House means nothing one way or other. That is what I am able to state on the question at this time."

Mr. Chintamani asked: "Is the Finance Member in a position to state whether he will be able to make a more definite statement either to-morrow or the day after to-morrow which may be the last day of the Council session?"

Mr. Lambert replied: As I say the question is now between the Governor and the Minister. It is not Government who appoint Ministers."

Mr. Chintamani asked: Can the Hon'ble Finance Member state whether the matter is under consideration of His Excellency the Governor."

Mr. Lambert replied: Undoubtedly.

#### Failure of Crops.

After the question time Mr. Vijai Pal Singh (Swarajist) moved the resolution recommending to Government that effective measures be taken forthwith to relieve the distress caused by the failure of the last "Rabi" and the present "Kharif" crops to remit the land revenue on a liberal scale and to grant an adequate help to the cultivators in every district.

Member after member narrated the pitiable condition of the cultivators owing to the recent drought and pressed Government to do their utmost to relieve the distress by remitting and suspending the land revenue.

In winding up the debate Mr. Lambert, the Finance Member said that he was entirely in sympathy with the spirit underlying the resolution. During the last "Rabi" season Government remitted no less than Rs. 4,43,000 and suspended another Rs. 27,000. There would be no reluctance on the part of the Government to help the cultivators. They will not fail in their duty and they will not minimise the situation. There was still time for the rains to make a great difference and he hoped that rains would fall. They will take all necessary steps to alleviate the distress. He would bring a supplementary estimate of ten lacs in addition to that of twenty already passed by the Council. The resolution was unanimously adopted.

#### Representation of Landlords.

Hafiz Hidayat Hussain next moved that this Council recommends to Government that proper authorities be informed that in the opinion of this Council the representation of the landlords of the province of Agra should be increased from two to seven and that one seat be allotted to landlords of the province of Oudh who are not members of the British Indian Association and who pay a revenue of Rs. 5,000 and over. The opposition benches were quite empty and it was said that they would not oppose the resolution. At present Oudh comprising two divisions of Lucknow and Fyzabad is empowered to send four representatives to the Council, while the province of Agra comprising eight divisions has only two seats. The Finance Member accepted the general principle of the resolution, but he would not commit Government to any specific number.

The resolution was adopted unanimously and the House adjourned.

On the 52TH SEPTEMBER both official and non-official business were quickly disposed of. Not only were two non-official resolutions discussed but in a short time all outstanding official business was dealt with.

There was practically no discussion on the Land Revenue Amendment Bill, which was referred to a Select Committee after the landlord members had been assured that the Government had no objection to new clauses being added to the Bill during the committee stage.

Mr. George Lambert (Leader of the House) set all doubts at rest by stating that Raja Jagannath Baksh Singh (Education Minister) had resigned on Sunday last and that his resignation has been accepted by the Governor.

#### Education of Depressed Classes.

After question-time Babu Rama Charan (nominated) moved the following resolution:—"That the Council recommends to the Governor acting with his Ministers to adopt special measures for the advancement of primary, secondary and higher education among children of the depressed classes."

Mr. Mackenzie, Director of Public Instruction, pointed out that the Government were doing everything in their power to advance the education of the depressed classes, but he could not accept the definite proposals of the mover without examining the data on which they were based. The resolution was eventually adopted.

Dr. Shafaat Ahmed Khan next moved: "That this Council recommends to the Government that steps should be taken to secure adequate representation for the land-owning classes in all the public services in the United Provinces." The resolution was eventually withdrawn.

Supplementary estimates were then taken up and voted. The items voted included a fresh grant for taqavi amounting to Rs. 10,00,000.

#### Land Revenue Amend. Bill.

Mr. Lambert introduced the Land Revenue (Settlement) Amendment Bill and moved its reference to a Select Committee composed of the Finance Member, the Raja of Salempur, Kunwar Bisheshwar Dayal Seth, Rai Rajeshwar Bali, Pandit Mulchand Dube, Hafiz Hidayat Hussin, Shaikh Muhammed Habibullah, Maulvi Fasih-ud-Din, Raja Bahadur Kushalpal Singh, Babu Mohan Lal, Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant, Messrs. Zahuruddin, Pim and Lane, and the Legal Remembrancer.

Babu Mohanlal and Mukandilal welcomed the Bill. The House carried the Finance Member's motion for referring the Bill to a Select Committee.

Mr. Lambert next introduced the Pargana Kaswar Raj (Amendment) Bill and moved its reference to a Select Committee. The motion was adopted without discussion and the House adjourned "sine die".

### The December Session.

#### THE POLICE CENSURED

The Winter Session of the Council commenced at Lucknow on the 13TH DECEMBER when although the contentious Land Revenue Bill was down for discussion interest mainly centred round Mr. C. Y. Chintamani's adjournment motion, which was taken exactly at 4 p.m.

The debate lasted two hours, the Home Member, the Chief Secretary and Mr. Masadul Hasan, a nominated member, speaking against the motion.

Mr. CHINTAMANI, proposing the motion, said that the incidents of Lucknow in connection with the visit of the Simon Commission had attracted attention throughout India and were regarded throughout the country as incidents which constituted a grave public scandal.

The reason why the Inspector General of Police in his evidence before the Commission expressed the view that he was averse to the idea of the control of the police by the legislature was abundantly and rudely manifest from the Lucknow incidents. It was an irony of fate that a Commission that had to decide the future of India dared not go into any city except under the protection of police criminals, whose lawless behaviour stood exposed before the whole country. It was hoped that the Lahore incidents, which were followed by Lala Lajpat Rai's death, would warn the U. P. Government to beware of what the police might do and to cure their excesses, but the police here were given a long rope.

On the top of them there were two communiques issued over the signature of the Chief Secretary, the Whitewasher-in-Chief of the United Provinces Government. The Chief Secretary would have the people believe that his police were angels and they could not be and never were in the wrong.

The speaker's politics were not on all fours with those of Pandit Jawaharlal, but he had the greatest respect for the young Pandit and could assert that Pandit Jawaharlal was an honest upright gentleman. There was nobody who would believe the official versions of the incidents in preference to the versions given by Pandit Jawaharlal and Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant.

It could not be doubted for a second that lawlessness was rampant in Lucknow for two weeks. The police were not content with the attention they paid to the demonstrators. Similar kindly attention was paid to the Maharaja of Mahmudabad, K. C. S. I. K. C. I. E., an ex-Home Member. The speaker

had in his possession correspondence and photographs which proved conclusively that the Maharaja and members of his family were virtually in police custody on two occasions.

The Maharaja, who three years back was responsible for law and order in these provinces, protested in vain. He was made to pay for the sin of his dark skin and his honest political opinion. He would like to ask the present Home Member how he could allow his predecessor in office to be repeatedly insulted. He would ask the Chief Secretary if it was impossible to spare the feelings of a man like the Maharaja of Mahmudabad, who was held in esteem by Hindus and Moslems, by Liberals and Extremists alike.

Kunwar Jagadish PRASAD, Chief Secretary, opposing the motion pointed out that the issue was whether the police measures in connection with the Simon Commission's visit to Lucknow were necessary and justified or not.

It had been the custom in Lucknow, he said, for several years past that no procession was allowed without a police licence. The first anti-Simon Commission demonstration procession was fixed for November 18, and a licence was given. There was no trouble. On November 23 the second procession was taken out but the licence was restricted to a particular route and when the processionists attempted to get into the restricted area the procession was disallowed. On November 24 and 26 there were no troubles because the Boycott Committee observed the restrictions imposed by the police. On November 28 the Secretary of the Boycott Committee wanted to take a procession through those parts of the city to which objection had been taken on November 23 and naturally no licence was granted and the procession was stopped and dispersed.

The incidents of November 29 were due to the failure of the Boycott Committee even to ask for a licence. A particular place was assigned to the demonstrators on November 30, but they would not keep to that place. The police had either to enforce the law and keep order or to keep aloof. The speaker hoped that the members of the Council knew what all generally happened wherever the police had failed to take stringent precautionary measures.

Members of the Commission were stoned at Delhi and at Cawnpore. They were not only stoned but even some of their cars were attacked. As far as Government were aware they had reasons to believe that the Manmad bomb explosion was connected with the arrival of the Commission in Bombay. Under such circumstances the Chief Secretary said the police had to be strict.

Regarding the incidents of December 5 in connection with the raid on Mr. Basudeolal's house he would prefer not to deal with it as it was likely to come up before a court of law in the near future.

Pandit Iqbal Narain GURTU dealt in detail with the incidents of November 28 and challenged the veracity of the Government communique. As to bombs and unseen dangers he would like to know how many bombs were thrown at Patna, Agra, Delhi and Cawnpore where the police did not prove their might by a free use of batons.

"By adopting these tactics you are digging your own grave. You talk of prestige. This is the way to bring your Government into contempt."

The Nawab of CHATTARI (Home Member) said that the incidents were regrettable but unavoidable. Government had the serious responsibility of protecting their guests and as there were reasons to apprehend untoward incidents the police had to take stringent measures. Government could not passively see members of the Royal Commission being stoned.

As to the unfortunate incidents connected with the Maharaja of Mahmudabad he could assure the House that no insult was intended. Mr. Gwynn, Deputy Commissioner of Lucknow, personally went to the Maharaja and expressed his regret. He had done so himself and as soon as the Maharaja came back to Lucknow the Chief Secretary would call on him personally to explain matters.

The motion was eventually put and adopted, Government not challenging a division.

On the 14TH DECEMBER, after question time, Thakur Manjit Singh Rathore, Swarajist, asked leave to move a resolution of "condolence" to the

Home Member in view of his supercession in officiating appointment of the Governorship.

Another Swarajist Member, Chaudhari Dharamvir Singh, also wanted leave to move an adjournment to discuss the same matter as one of urgent public importance. The President ruled both motions perfectly out of order.

The Council then proceeded to the second reading of the Land Revenue Bill. Three clauses of minor importance in the Bill were discussed. The vital and controversial clause relating to assessable area, assets and percentage of assets was discussed on the next day, the 15TH DECEMBER when, shortly after question, Lala Mathura Prasad Mehrotra, Secretary of the Nationalist Party and a landholder member, moved an adjournment of the business of the House till Monday with a view to give time to non-official members to hold an informal discussion upon the vital clauses of the Bill and arrive at a decision regarding the non-official attitude towards them. The Finance Member agreed to the proposal for adjournment and the Council was accordingly adjourned.

At question time a Swarajist member asked if the C. I. D. maintained a list of persons considered to be a danger to the British Government and whether the names of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, the Maharaja of Mahmudabad and other prominent politicians were included in such a list.

The Home Member's reply was that the Government must decline to give any information regarding the confidential activities of the police.

The Council discussed the Land Revenue Amendment Bill till the 21ST DECEMBER when its third reading was passed. Several landholder members, in supporting the passage of the Bill, paid glowing tributes to Mr George Lambert, Finance Member, for his conciliatory attitude towards the landlords' demands.

The Swarajist members blamed the Government for not showing adequate consideration to petty Zemindars and charged the landlord members with the betrayal of the interests of their less affluent brethren.

The Council then adjourned "sine die."

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# The Punjab Legislative Council.

The summer session of the Punjab Legislative Council commenced at Lahore on the 4TH MAY 1928 when non-official resolutions were discussed.

Mr. Baldev Singh's resolution recommending to the Government to set apart Rs. 10 lakhs during the present year to be distributed as loans without interest, among the poor zemindars of Rohtak, Hissar, Gurgaon and Karnal districts, recovery of the loan commencing four years hence, was rejected by 15 to 30 votes, after three hours' discussion.

Rai Sahib Lala Gangaram moved a resolution recommending that steps be taken to introduce training in military drill and use of fire-arms along with physical drill in all Government recognised co leges.

Sardar Ujjal Singh supporting the resolution said that it asked for a beginning to be made and the Esher Committee had recommended similar training. Punjab had always been a virile military race and as such were quite good for military training.

Dr. Gokulchand Narang said that military training was necessary to undo the mischief wrought by the wholesale emasculation of the people by the Arms Act. Government did not trust the people. The more the persons who could use arms meant greater strength to Government. Indians were not deprived of arms by the Hindu and Muslim rulers but only by the British Government. Popular confidence in Government's bonafides could be restored only if Government made the beginning of military training in their colleges. Chaudhuri Afzal Haq, Diwan Bahadur Raja Narendranath and Lala Mohanlal supported the resolution.

The Council then adjourned.

## Election to Simon Committee.

On the 5TH MAY Sir Fazli Hussain moved and the House agreed to the following resolution — "The election of a committee of seven representatives of the Legislative Council to take part in the joint conference of the Indian Statutory Commission according to the principle of proportionate representation by means of single transferable vote."

The Select Committee's report on the Punjab preemption Amendment Bill was presented and considered and the Bill was passed.

## Punjab Land Revenue Bill.

Sir Fazli Hussain moved that the Punjab Land Revenue Bill as amended by the Select Committee be passed.

Mr. Chaudhri Afzal Haq moved that the bill be circulated to elicit opinion and contended that the matter had not been sufficiently considered by the public and the Bill had not emerged from the Select Committee as a perfect measure.

Sir Fazli Hussain in opposing the amendment said that it was unnecessary to keep the measure pending as sufficient time had already been spent on it and a fair idea of general public opinion was available.

After some further discussion the amendment was negatived by a large majority. Other amendments were then moved.

Chaudhri Afzal Haq by means of another amendment which was negatived urged that while fixing the rate of assessment, the cost of labour incurred by the agriculturist should be taken into consideration. The Revenue Secretary explained the policy of the Government and said that it was difficult to ascertain the cost of labour as it varied and to go by such criterion would lead to invidious distinctions. Every time assessment was fixed it was done after a thorough preliminary survey by the Settlement Officer. Discussion on other amendments was not concluded when the Council adjourned till Monday.

On the 7TH MAY when discussion on the Land Revenue Bill was resumed, Rana Ferozuddin Khan moved that all land to whatever applied and wherever situated is liable to payment of Land Revenue to the Government. He added that exception should be made in case of such land as has been wholly exempted from that liability by a special contract with the Government or by provisions of any law for the time being in force. Second exception is in case of holdings not exceeding two acres in the canal irrigated areas and not exceeding five acres in the areas where there is no canal irrigation and third exception is in case of land under village abadi or required for its extension. Speakers representing Zamindari interests stressed importance of the first exception. Replying to the debate Sir Fazli Hussain observed that acting on the amendment meant fundamental departure in the Land Revenue Policy not in vogue in other provinces. The Government sympathised with the object underlying the amendment but could not give effect to it as it was not practicable. Sardar Ujjal Singh opposed the amendment and said that if carried out it would lead to further fragmentation and check the process of consolidation of holdings leading to loss of revenue. The amendment was rejected by 23 against 14.

Rai Sahib Chaudhuri Chhotu Ram moved the following amendment :—

"The local Government shall have power to exempt in whole or in part any holding or any class of holdings from payment of land revenue."

Sir Geoffrey de Montmorency said that the amendment gave the Government wide discretion which was neither necessary nor specially useful. Lala Mohanlal said that the power proposed to be given would lead to corruption. Mr. Yafzulla Khan said that it was extraordinary that the Government should refuse to take what the Council offered. Mr. Emerson, Chief Secretary, said that it was not desirable that the executive should have unlimited discretionary powers in a matter like land revenue.

Opposing Dewan Bahadur Rajendra Nath said that it was absurd to give the Executive such power.

Sir Fazli Hussain observed that once the Government got the power proposed the question would arise as to how and when it could be exercised and all sorts of claims would be advanced all of which could not be satisfied with the consequence that the Government would be charged with being irresponsible and failing to do their duty. On division the House rejected the amendment by 35 against 28. The House then adjourned.

On the 8TH MAY Government sustained a defeat when the non-official amendment to clause (4) of the Punjab Land Revenue (Amendment) Bill substituting the words one-fourth in the place of one-third while assessing the estimated money value or net assets, was carried by 41 to 30 votes. Full four hours were devoted to the discussion of one amendment only. The debate was characterised by the liveliness of the speeches, both in opposition to and in support of it. As many as seven official members partook in the debate and made illuminating observations on the land revenue policy of Government.

Sir Geoffrey de Montmorency, Finance Member, asked the House to remember that it was by carefully building up this main source of revenue that the Punjab had been brought to its present position of prosperity.

Mr. Afzal Haq (Nationalist) pointed out that if the tendency of Government were not changed a second Bardoli would be created in the Punjab.

The amendment, when put to the vote, was carried amid non-official applause. The Council then adjourned.

#### Compulsory Military Training.

On the 9TH MAY, after question time, discussion was resumed on the resolution urging the introduction of military training and use of fire-arms in all government colleges.

Shaikh Mohamad Sadiq and Rai Sahib Sevakram supported the motion, the latter pointing out that Government were unnecessarily frightened about the possible consequences of the use of fire-arms by Indians.

Sardar Narain Singh said that military training would make the younger generation so strong that they could defend themselves against dacoits. Con-



sequently crimes would become rarer when Government could do with lesser number of Magistrates and Police.

Mr. Sanderson, Director of Public Instruction said that the present time was not appropriate for introducing the use of fire-arms. He added that a beginning had already been made in respect of military drill in schools and colleges. Khan Bahadur Chaudhuri Fazal Ali said that it was dangerous to trust young men with the use of fire-arms.

Pandit Nanakchand said that the spirit of the resolution was to make military training compulsory. It is natural that students should come under the influence of politicians but once disciplined by military training would help in keeping rather than in breaking peace.

Sir Geoffrey de Montmorency said that the resolution dealt with an all-India question and reiterated the principle which the Government of India had accepted, in respect of the Territorial and Auxiliary forces and the University Training Corps. Sir Geoffrey de Montmorency explained what steps had been taken in the Punjab to instil and stimulate interest in the University Training Corps and although facilities provided by Government were not availed of in full the progress made was not inconsiderable.

Mr. Monoharlal, Education Minister, associated himself with the remarks of the previous speaker. The resolution was then adopted and the house adjourned.

On the 10TH MAY the adjournment motion moved by Mr. Afzal Huj to call attention to the release of an informer from jail before the expiry of his term of imprisonment was talked out after a keen discussion. Sir Geoffrey de Montmorency made a statement defending the Government's action.

Earlier in the day, the Council discussed the Land Revenue Amend. Bill.

#### Discussion on Release of Police Informer.

The Council took up for discussion in the evening the adjournment motion of Mr. Chaudhuri Afzal Haq regarding the release of K. C. Banerjee, a police informer, who was sentenced to five years' rigorous imprisonment by the Lahore Magistrate for possessing a pistol without licence in July last.

Non-official members expressed dissatisfaction at the replies given by the Government and opined that definite charges against the Government had not been answered.

Sir Geoffrey de Montmorency, replying, on behalf of the Government, said that in October 1926, a bomb outrage occurred in Lahore during the Dusserah, which resulted in the death of 12 persons and injuries to 49 others. Despite continuous efforts of the Punjab Police, they were not successful in obtaining evidence sufficient for judicial proceedings being launched against the perpetrators of this crime. In the course of their enquiry, they obtained certain clues connecting this crime with certain persons in other provinces. The Punjab police therefore kept a careful watch over suspicious persons coming to Lahore from other provinces. A few months later they received information that a suspicious character who had been concerned in dacoities in the United Provinces came to Lahore at the invitation of a bad character with the intention of committing dacoity in this province, for the purpose of raising funds for anarchical purposes. Later, this information was confirmed by the U. P. Police. The Punjab Police were further informed that a person who had given information regarding this suspicious character to the U. P. Police had also arrived in Lahore, and had established touch with this suspicious character. This person however never made any communication to the Punjab Police, and did not get into touch with them. The Punjab police located the suspect and another member of the gang, continuously watched them for some days. Their information was that a dacoity was to be committed in a certain place, and that one member of the gang had actually gone to the house, and reconnoitred the ground. The Police kept a careful watch for their arrest, but a few days later ascertained that the intended dacoity had been abandoned and that the suspect in question was about to leave Lahore and that he was armed.

Sir Geoffrey de Montmorency said that when Bannerjee accompanied by another person, came to Lahore railway station and entered a carriage, both

were arrested and searched. On Bannerjee was found a revolver hanging from his shirt, and some ammunition in his pocket. He was convicted by the Magistrate on the 23rd of July last. Incidentally Sir Geoffrey observed that he (Bannerjee) and his surety failed to turn up at the date of hearing, and a warrant issued for his arrest to procure his appearance. At the time of the arrest and at the time of the trial, Bannerjee alleged that he was a person who had given useful help to the District Police in the United Provinces and was still engaged in that work. This statement required close verification, and was not in itself sufficient to absolve Bannerjee from the charge of carrying arms without licence. From enquiries made in the United Provinces, it was found that he was in fact a man who had in the past given useful information to the Meerut Police, and detection of crime. Thereupon it was considered that for his offence a short term of imprisonment was enough, and the remainder of his term was remitted under Section 401, C. P. C. He was released after he had undergone two months' imprisonment.

Continuing, Sir Geoffrey said that since the publication of the article in "The Tribune," certain further enquiries had been made, and it had been ascertained that the letter written to Mr. Chunilal, Superintendent of Police C. I. D., Lahore, reproduced in "The Tribune" was never received by that officer. It was true that the prisoner did write regarding payment of money due to him from the United Provinces and regarding his grievances at his incarceration. One of these communications was on a post-card, and bore the stamp of the Central Jail. It had also been ascertained that no revolver was supplied to Bannerjee either by the United Provinces Police or by any Police official. The revolver was not a Government revolver as alleged. There was further no proof that Bannerjee was an "Agent provocateur. He acted on his own account.

The United Provinces Police were quite in their rights in using information provided by the informer in order to keep in touch with the movements of one of their criminal suspects. Sir Geoffrey thought that their action was justifiable and said that some informers might not be deserving of this consideration, while others who gave really useful information leading to detection and prevention of crime and protection of the public, deserved consideration. Sir Geoffrey added: "We are fortified that this informer belongs to the latter class and that he has given valuable information in the past, and we therefore take a lenient view of his offence."

The adjournment motion was however talked out

#### Land Revenue Amend. Bill.

On the 11TH MAY discussion was continued on the clauses of the Land Revenue Bill. Clause 9 to 16 were passed without any discussion, the members who had tabled amendments to these clauses not being present in the House

Four hours were devoted to the discussion on amendments to clause 7, consideration of which had been postponed yesterday. The President ruled the amendment as out of order and gave his ruling that the local Council had no power to legislate conferring appellate powers on the High Court as the Central Legislature had jurisdiction in the matter.

#### ELECTION TO SIMON COMMITTEE.

The Council then proceeded to elect a committee of seven representatives of the Council to partake in the joint conference with the Indian Statutory Commission.

While the voting papers were being distributed, the President announced that Rai Sahib Chaudhri Choturam, Chaudhri Zafarullah Khan and Capt. Sikandar Hayat Khan had withdrawn from the election.

At this stage, Malik Ferozekhan Noon, Minister, announced that he also wished to withdraw his name.

The President wanted to know whether they could proceed with the election when only four candidates out of eight remained.

Dr. Gokalchand Narang objected to the eleventh hour withdrawal when

voting papers had been already distributed, and asked the President whether these persons could withdraw their names.

The President said that the question of withdrawal was absolutely in the hand of the candidates.

Chaudhri Zafrullah Khan, one of the candidates who had withdrawn his name at the eleventh hour, rose and said that he with two of his colleagues had withdrawn their names because they found that there was no unanimity among the candidates of their party, and in such circumstances they did not like to stand.

At this stage the Hon'ble Malik Ferozekhan Noon stood up and said that considering the attendance of members in the House, they found it difficult to get four men elected from their party. "Therefore" he added, "we agreed between ourselves that I shall withdraw, and make room for the other three colleagues of our party. If you kindly permit my withdrawal I will stand out, and the other three members of my party may go in."

The President said that the Minister had made a sacrifice for the sake of unanimity, and he hoped that the election of the remaining seven would be unanimous.

The President declared the following committee of seven as having been elected: Chaudhri Zafarullah Khan, Captain Sikandar Hayat Khan, Rai Sahib Chaudhri Choturam, Raja Narendranath, Dr. Gokalchand Narang, Sardar Ujjal Singh and Mr. Roberts. The announcement was received with applause.

The committee consisted of three Rural Party men, two members of the National Reform Party, one Sikh and one European to represent the minorities and the Depressed Classes.

#### Discussion on Land Revenue Bill.

The Council next resumed consideration of the Land Revenue bill.

Sir Fazli Hussain moved the final reading of the Bill, which was passed without a division. Before he made the motion, Sir Fazli Hussain pointed out that the amendments passed by the House modified in very important particulars, the Bill as originally introduced after discussion with and by the permission of the Government of India. In the circumstance, though the Government would not oppose the passing of the Bill it would be necessary for it, considering the position which had arisen, to decide whether it should recommend to His Excellency the Governor that the Bill be returned by him for re-consideration on certain points or be reserved for consideration of the Governor-General.

Mr. Mahomed Hussain resented this statement, and said that even if the Bill was returned to the Council they would not budge an inch from their position. He asked the Revenue Member to consider the matter very carefully before recommending the return of the Bill; otherwise they would create an unprecedented agitation in the province.

#### Enquiry into Damage to wheat Crop.

The Council also passed a resolution recommending an investigation into the nature and extent of the damage done to wheat crops of the season and for the giving of immediate relief by the remission of Abiana and land revenue.

Sir Fazli Hussain, accepting the resolution on behalf of the Government, informed the House that the Government had already instituted an enquiry into the damage of crops, and had decided to give relief by remission of Abiana and Land Revenue as soon as they received reports from their officers.

The House then adjourned 'Sine Die'.

#### Governor's Address.

Sir Geoffrey De Montmorency, Governor of the Punjab, opened the winter Session of the Punjab Legislative Council at Lahore on the 26th November 1928. A large number of members were present. The visitors' gallery was crowded, a good number of European ladies being present. His Excellency arrived punctually at 2 p.m. and was conducted in a procession to the dais. His Excellency took about 45 minutes to finish his address after which the Council adjourned till November 28. The following is a summary of the Governor's speech:—

"Before I pass on to discuss some questions in which the Legislative Council has been interested, let me briefly refer to the matter which has been occupying the attention of the public both in and outside the province, I mean the sudden death of Lala Lajpat Rai. I freely join in the tributes of those who testify to his sustained work for social improvement, amelioration of the condition of the masses and educational development and while there were points both of creed and method in his political programme upon which other schools of thought held substantially differing views none, and I include myself, can fail to appreciate the devotion with which he continuously laboured for those political ideals which he conceived to be in the interests of the advance of his country." His Excellency conveyed to the Council a message of Sir Malcolm Hailey appreciating the Council's spirit of co-operation and responsibility and regretting that he could not bid personal farewell to the Council.

His Excellency next paid a glowing tribute to Sir Malcolm Hailey's work as Governor of the Punjab and observed: "In the same furrows I shall strive to guide my course in the service of the province. If I can count upon any asset to help me in my difficult task, it will be upon my association with the Council as a member of it."

Referring to the Punjab Land Revenue Amendment Bill passed by the Council in May last, His Excellency observed: "After due consideration of the several alternatives open to me, I have decided to reserve the Bill for consideration of the Governor-General and the Bill has been submitted accordingly."

Referring to the question of rural uplift, His Excellency observed: "There have been some allegations in the press that Government is indifferent to rural uplift work and is doing little to foster it. This appears to be a complete misconception. Government is strongly in favour of a direct effort to overcome whatever obstacles, apathy, ignorance or innate conservatism may place in the way of improvement of conditions of rural life or of poorer and more backward classes in urban areas. Government, however, realises the importance of some driving force of an organised enthusiasm or some special propagandist effort and believes alliance of such activities is essential to success in this direction."

Touching the question of exemption from restrictions under the Arms Act, His Excellency announced that as a result of experiment in eight districts in the province, his Government had recommended to the India Government an extension of the experiment to nine more districts.

From the point of view of agricultural prosperity His Excellency observed that the season had been the most inauspicious and referred to the prompt measures taken by Government for the relief of the flood-stricken areas.

#### NATIONALISTS ABSENT.

The Nationalist members of the Council did not attend on this day as a mark of protest against the Government's attitude towards enquiry into the incidents near Lahore Railway station on October 30, which, they alleged, hastened Lalajis death.

In absenting themselves Dr. Alam, leader of the Party with Mr. Mota Singh, Chowdhury Afzal Haq, Dr. Gopichand Bhargava, Messrs. Hira Singh, Pratap Singh, Mohamad Sadail, Lala Bodhraj and Chowdhury Mohammad, Abdul Rahman issued the following statement:—

"We the present members of the Nationalist Party of the Punjab Legislative Council and Dr. Gopichand Bhargava who endorses our views consider that the action of the Punjab Government in condoning the cowardly attack of the Police on Lala Lajpat Rai and others on the day of arrival of the Simon Commission at Lahore and its subsequent behaviour even after the death of Lala Lajpat Rai, the great patriot, is deserving of the strongest censure. It is therefore upto us to voice universal public feelings of indignation against this attitude of the Government in an emphatic manner as we can by absenting ourselves to-day on the occasion of the address of His Excellency the Governor to the members of the Punjab Legislative Council. We will later take such further action as lies in our power to give expression to our views in this matter."

On the 28TH NOVEMBER the Council held a short but an eventful session. About sixty members were present including the Nationalists. Mr. Chowdhury Shahabuddin was in the chair. Before the session started it was stated in the lobbies that Dr. Mahomed

Alam will move the adjournment motion regarding the alleged police attack on Lala Lajpat Rai. The motion was actually drafted but at the last moment the proposal was dropped.

The President next said "Gentlemen, you will be deeply and sincerely sorry for the great and irreparable loss the country suffered by the unexpected and sudden death of Lala Lajpat Rai of world-wide fame. Unique and invaluable services rendered by him to social, educational and national causes are too well-known to require any mention. I am sure all of you will agree with me that he has passed away at the time when his services were sorely needed by his country. His loss is no doubt a national loss and has, therefore, been mourned both in and outside the country. I hope you will permit me to send on your behalf a message of condolence and sympathy to the members of the bereaved family."

#### Supplementary Grants.

Government demands for additional and supplementary grants for 1928-29 and for excess grants for 1926-27 aggregating about fifty-three lakhs were voted without much discussion. These pertained to provincial loans and advances and expenditure in irrigation, civil works, medical and agriculture.

On the motion of Sir Fazli Husain the Sind Sagar Doab Colonisation Repealing Bill was referred to a Select Committee. The Council then adjourned.

#### Money-lender's Accounts Bill.

On the 29TH NOVEMBER the Council held a lively discussion on various non-official resolutions. The resolution of Chaudhury Dulichand recommending the introduction of Money-lender's Accounts Bill in the next session of the Council occasioned very heated debate in which a large number of members participated. The mover said that the Government's difficulty in drafting it referred to in the Governor's speech could easily be met by employing suitable draftsman in Legislative Department.

Mr. Maqbool Mahmud (Author of the Money-lender's Bill) appealed to the Government member in charge to expedite the framing of the Bill by having consultations with the supporters and opposers of the Bill.

Dr. Gokulchand Narang suggested the attitude of "wait and see" on this question. It was no use passing a resolution which might give the impression of political irresponsibility of the Council till after the grant of Reforms. Several other members took part in the discussion.

The President objected to, following the House of Commons' practice, the attempt to influence opinion on the resolution by quoting the Governor's speech. The Finance Member in a maiden speech said that the Government could not agree to the time limit proposed in the resolution.

The Home Member was willing to receive suggestions on the subject from members. He assured the House that Government would not spare pains in drafting the Bill as soon as possible but it must be satisfactory. The speech was received favourably by the whole House and the resolution was withdrawn.

M. Yasin Khan's resolution recommending equalising of irrigation percentage in Ara sub-division on Lower Jhelum Canal with a percentage provided for the colony area was defeated by 20 to 25 votes. The Council thereafter adjourned at 5 p.m.

#### Assault on Lala Lajpat Rai.

On the 30TH NOVEMBER amidst tense excitement Dr. Mahomed Alam moved a resolution recommending to the Government that a committee of non-official members of the Council be appointed to enquire into the conduct of those officials, including Mr. Scott, Superintendent of Police, who assaulted and beat the leaders and the public on October 30, 1928, at Lahore and arrested and detained Pandit Peary Mohan, Assistant Editor of the "Tribune" on the same date.

Dr. Mahomed Alam, in a long speech said that when they arrived in procession at the end of Landebazar a European police officer caught hold of Lala Lajpat Rai by the collar (cries of "Shame") The officer had a long stick in his hand with which he struck Lala Lajpat Rai near the region of the heart, (cries of "shame"). The speaker proceeded to the spot where Lala Lajpat Rai was, but before he reached the place a blow with a regulation lathi fell on him. He was sorry that the blow received by him was not severe and he supposed the Government must be sorry that it was not hard enough. Lala Lajpat Rai was beaten cruelly and mercilessly. Some members, in their effort to protect him, received blows on their persons. Among those were Dr. Satyapal and Daud Ghuznavi. Lala Lajpat Rai had said in a public meeting that those blows were the nails in the coffin of the British Empire, but the speaker would say that the blows drove the nails still deeper.

Proceeding, he said that there was ample evidence to show that Lala Lajpat Rai died of those blows. Lala Lajpat Rai's dying declaration to Diwan Chamanlal was that he was singled out for the assault. If India were a free country the death of a person like Lala Lajpat Rai would have originated a war between India and England.

Referring to official enquiry he said that Indians had been nearly 150 years under British Rule and they could no longer be fooled.

Proceeding, Dr. Alam said that the evidence recorded before the Boyd Enquiry was false. One witness, a legal practitioner, stated that he talked to the speaker and was his friend. "Can you ever believe that such a man, who made a false statement in favour of the Government, could be my friend?" he declared. Further, he himself saw an Inspector of Police pull out a wooden slipper from his pocket and threw it at the scene on October 30. The speaker at once shouted: "This is how police evidence is made up".

Referring to the treatment accorded to the Assistant Editor of the "Tribune" he said that these allegations were being made in open House and it was up to the Government to clear their conduct by agreeing to the enquiry asked for.

Mr. BEAZLEY, formerly Secretary to the Transferred Department, but now Chief Secretary, in opposing the resolution explained in detail the events which preceded the incident of October 30. In March last, when the Commission arrived, it was the policy of the Government to interfere with processions as little as possible. This proved unsuccessful. The processionists ignored the orders of the Government. It was, therefore, clear that on the next occasion much more stringent measures were necessary. This became all the more necessary owing to the explosion at Manmad, which was a connected attempt on the lives of the President and Members of the Simon Commission, and the explosion at Lahore. The Government did not think it advisable to commit themselves to a situation favourable to the throwing of a bomb and it was, therefore, decided not to allow the crowd to gain access to a place from where a bomb could be thrown. The experience of the Dusehra had shown that when a person threw a bomb from a crowd it was difficult to catch him. The Government's apprehension was further increased owing to the boycotters having sent for from outside Lahore volunteers and speeches were made exhorting young men to speak dangerously and act dangerously.

Mr. Beazley next said that it was anticipated that the crowd would be too large for the police cordon at the railway station to cope with. Therefore, barbed wire barricades were set up. A gap was left for the passengers to pass through. The processionists left Mochi Gate at 1.30 and reached the barrier. From here, he said the accounts differed. He read out the official and non-official versions. These were issued by the Government in the form of a press communique. Owing to these conflicting reports the Government ordered an enquiry by a senior official of twenty eight years standing. Every facility was given for the witnesses.

The speaker then read out passages from the report of Mr. Boyd.

Mr. Beazley said that Mr. Boyd in giving his conclusions says: It is quite clear from the statement of all the witnesses who mentioned the subject that the scuffle only lasted one, two or at the outside three minutes. It seems to me that the police acted with proper restraint but in the melee of the kind bruises are certain to be inflicted and gentlemen who are members of the Legislature are more likely to feel hurt morally, if not physically, by the rough usage which the police must exercise in pressing back a crowd than would the ordinary people who are not accustomed to receive defence and consideration wherever they go. I think that the undue sensitiveness of politicians in the front rank of the crowd is at the bottom of the fuss which has been made over a very ordinary incident. Their sensitiveness is undue because they had definitely expressed the intention of disregarding the ban placed by the District Magistrate upon unauthorised processions and could not fairly expect that their path would be unobstructed. I am satisfied that the Inspector General asked the crowd to go back before he called upon the police to push them back. There is no doubt that missiles were thrown by the crowd and that it surged forward merely on account of pressure from behind. It cannot, therefore, be held to have been perfectly orderly. It was alleged that the attack upon Lala Lajpat Rai and other leaders was singled out by the police for ill-treatment. But being in the front rank they naturally must have received injuries just as some of the police received injuries and probably some of them were hit on the hands when they placed them on the barricade on their first arrival. I am satisfied that when the procession reached the barrier at the mouth of Landa bazar it was orderly except that one or two members put their hands on the barrier in such a way as to lead at least two police officers to think that they meant to climb over or push over the barrier.

Concluding Mr. Beazley said that the Government had accepted these conclusions. It was always a matter of regret for the Government whenever a collision occurred between the crowd and the police, but in this case it was all the more regrettable owing to the personalities involved.

Raizada Hansraj, in supporting the resolution, said that the attack on them was deliberate and intentional. Mr. Gokulchand Narang said that the defeat of this resolution would mean that the Government, in spite of the most serious charge of murder that had been levelled against its officials, was callous.

Mr. Stow, Finance Member, said that events had reached such a stage that even if a fresh enquiry was held it was impossible to record impartial evidence.

Chaudhury Zafrulla Khan said that he could not say in what way the Government had erred in the appointment of the Boyd Enquiry Committee. Therefore, he could not persuade himself to support the resolution.

Mr. Gopichand, a victim of the alleged police assault, said that he was against the resolution. As a non-co-operator it was his duty to violate any law which he considered illegal and when he violated it he must meet the consequence for breaking it.

The discussion had not concluded when the Council adjourned till December 3.

On the 3RD DECEMBER, at question time, there was a tussel between the president on one side and Dr. Alam and Mr. Afzal Haq on the other. The latter had enquired the Government whether any enquiry had been made into the allegations of Sir Michael O'Dwyer that there was a section of the Swarajists including Khilafat rump which would be willing to invite foreign invasion and foment local rebellion in the hope of putting down British Rule.

Mr. Stow, Finance Member, in reply said that no enquiries were made. Dr. Alam and Mr. Afzalhaq insisted on asking whether the Government attached any importance to Sir Michael O'Dwyer's statements, and if so, why no enquiry was held. The President repeated that the questions were out of order, as answer would amount to an expression of opinion.

Mr. Afzalhaq next asked if various statements of Sir Michael O'Dwyer published in the provincial press regarding the political situation in the Punjab excited class hatred.

Mr. Stow replied that the Government had no reason to suppose so.

Replying to Dr. Gopichand's question Mr. Stow said that the Government were making enquiries into the behaviour of the police at Kurukshetra.

Dr. Gopichand continuing the speech on Dr. Alam's resolution said that he had told the Government official that the bomb on the Dusehra day was thrown by the Government's agent provocateur. This was obvious from the fact that the bomb was of service pattern. He declared that after beating them on the barricade, the Inspector General, the senior Superintendent of Police and the European D. S. P. pushed them back including the late Lala Lajpat Rai by holding the neck (shame).

Concluding Dr. Gopichand warned the Government that they will only be responsible for consequences which would follow the refusal of a non-official enquiry.

Mr. Pir Akbarali opposing the resolution emphasised the necessity of respecting law. Government should not place a premium on political agitation.

Mr. Nanakchand criticised the Boyd report and said that the Government was not sincere in enquiring the Boyd enquiry.

Mr. Jogendra Singh, Minister for Agriculture, said that no member of the legislature should join the crowd which would encroach on the maintenance of law and order.

On a point of order raised by Mr. Afzalhaq, the President objected to Mr. Jogendra Singh reading a speech.

Proceeding the Minister said that it was not possible for a new enquiry after these speeches to record impartial evidence.

Mr. Gray said that the police should be supported for maintaining law and order. He cited parallel cases from European country to show how police here did not act more harshly on the crowd.

Mr. Cowan said that Lala Lajpat Rai's death was not due to injuries received on the 30th. Because, firstly, he then received only superficial bruises, secondly, he took part in various activities from 30th October till the day of his death.

Mr. Farazuddin said that he had not expected Government opposition on this resolution as it gave them an opportunity to clear the conduct of their officials. But as its passage would not benefit non-officials so he would advise its withdrawal. Mr. Daultram Kalia said that it was the duty of policemen to use force against those breaking law and order. The question was put and Dr. Alam started replying.

Dr. Alam replying to the debate said that in refusing the offer of an enquiry the

Government had done harm to themselves. He charged the Government with murder. He did not question the honesty or dishonesty of Mr. Boyd who merely performed his duty and produced a report based on partial evidence. The Boyd Enquiry was instituted merely to help the Government in canvassing against the speakers for the resolution as its conclusions were made public during the discussion of the resolution.

Sir Fazli Hussain, speaking on behalf of the Government defended the decisions arrived at by Mr. Boyd and deplored the personal reflections on Mr. Boyd by some speakers. He said that it was not fair to place elderly leaders at the head of political demonstrations. The leading of crowds should be left to young blood. Finally he said that it would not be possible to appoint on an enquiry committee non-officials who would command the confidence of the whole House. Therefore, no useful purpose would be served by pressing the resolution.

At this stage the resolution was put to the vote and defeated by 51 votes to 22. The Council then adjourned *sine die*.

## The C. P. Legislative Council.

Addressing the C. P. Council which began its autumn session at Nagpur on the 15TH AUGUST 1928 His Excellency Sir Montagu Butler dwelling on the Simon Commission hoped the House would change their minds and appoint a committee to co-operate with the Commission.

At the outset His Excellency paid tributes to the memory of the late Sir Frank Sly, the first Governor of C. P. and said that his name would never be forgotten here.

His Excellency then referred to the scarcity in the Northern District and assured the House that the authorities have not spared themselves to alleviate the distress.

The Governor then referred to H. E. the Viceroy's visit to this province and traced the recent events which put this province in full tide of events.

He then repeated his request for the exercise of some self-restraint in the matter of asking questions and giving notices of resolutions which are not considered for want of time. The Governor then referred to new official measures which will be moved during the current session.

### Simon Commission.

Referring to the Simon Commission His Excellency said :—"So far I have referred to business which is to come before you. Since the agenda for the session was published I have been frequently asked about the absence from it of any motion for election of a committee to assist the Statutory Commission and it has been suggested to me that I should make my position clear. I confess I am a little surprised that it should be necessary for me to say anything on this subject. My attitude has been always to offer you frankly the best advice I can on topics concerning the welfare of the province and then to leave it to you to decide what you will do and make the best of your decision.

"When I became Governor here the constitution was in abeyance. There was no ministry. Your public men were losing a priceless opportunity of gaining experience, whilst the province as a whole was losing the benefit of an administration influenced directly by the people's will. I told you then that I thought you were making a mistake and appealed to your good sense to play the part allotted to you by the Constitution. I made it clear also that I would help you all I could if and when you wished for my help. At the same time I did not disguise from you that the Government would be carried on whatever you decided and that the decision as to whether you would take part in it rested with you and you only. The trust I showed was not misplaced and before long you came forward and put in your own ministers with the happiest results to all concerned.

"My attitude has been and is the same about the Statutory Commission. Last January I advised you not to be rushed into refusing to recognise this body but to rest content with registering your dissatisfaction with its composition and so await events. You thought otherwise and threw away the advantage which a waiting policy so often gives. Now several of the other provinces have decided to appoint committees to sit with



the Commission and by the time all have come to a decision it may well be that we shall be left stranded and alone. There are some I know who like the feeling of being stranded, but as the head of this province I should regret our isolation if it occurred not only on general grounds, but because frankly I am apprehensive as to what the result of such a policy to our own future will be.

"Earlier in my remarks I have claimed that as a province we have grown up but this is not yet recognised everywhere and there are still those who look upon us as backward and point to 1921, only seven years ago, as the date when we emerged from the Chief Commissioner stage of benevolent autocracy. I do not know the mind of the Statutory Commission. I have had no contact as yet with it or any member of it, but as a practical man I cannot but envisage the possibility that it may interpret your unwillingness to ask for more reforms as unfitness to receive them and that we may suffer in consequence.

"Even so I do not propose to depart from the attitude I took up before over the ministry. I advise you to appoint a committee but having done that I am going to leave the matter to your good sense and make the best of your decision. At present I see no sign that you would pass a motion for the appointment of a committee. So I am not putting a motion to you but my belief in you is not shaken and I shall continue until the last moment to hope that you will change your attitude. Should you do so, you know you can count on me to do anything I can to help you to register your decision. Beyond this I want to say nothing except that personally I shall be greatly disappointed if I do not get your mandate to ask for more reforms for the province as without such a mandate I shall be crippled from the outset. The decision is yours and not mine. I hope it will be favourable but if not, I shall still feel that there is nothing personal in the refusal and that our friendly relations will remain unchanged.

Regarding the establishment of the Chief Court His Excellency said:—"The creation of a High Court involves elevation of the province to the position of a major province which means an act of Parliament. It is a serious matter and one involving delay. His Excellency warned the House that they will be running a risk if they refused now to take the Chief Court offered them.

After His Excellency the Governor's speech the Council adjourned for some time and re-assembled at 1 P. M. only to be adjourned before 2 P. M.

On re-assembling the Hon'ble the President referred to Sir Frank Sly's death. Mr. Khaparde, leader of the Nationalist party, associated himself with what fell from the President.

The House then passed bills amending the Municipalities Act and the Primary Education Act. Reports of Select Committee on the Local Self-Government Amendment Bill and the Municipalities Second Amendment Bill were presented and the Primary Education Second Amendment Bill was referred to a Select Committee. The House then adjourned.

On the 16TH AUGUST the Council considered the official bills. After question time the State Aid to Industries Bill and the Opium Bill were referred to Select Committees.

The Hon'ble Mr. Nelson wanted the Courts of Wards Amendment Bill to be referred to a Select Committee which was strongly opposed by the Swarajists and Rao Bahadur Kelkar moved that the Bill be circulated for eliciting public opinion which motion was carried. The Land Revenue Amendment Bill was passed into law without any material discussion.

The Hon'ble Mr. Tambe then moved that the Courts Bill be referred to a Select Committee which was opposed by several members. Mr. Kedar proposed that the Bill be rejected which was carried, 37 voting for and 15 against.

As regards the Irrigation Bill the House decided to circulate it for eliciting public opinion. The Hon'ble Mr. Rao, Excise Minister, presented the report of the Select Committee on Opium Smoking Bill and wanted the House to consider it at once, but as that motion was not included in the agenda some non-officials objected to it and eventually consideration of the Select Committee's report was postponed and the House adjourned.

#### THE NO-CONFIDENCE MOTION.

On the 17TH AUGUST galleries were packed in anticipation that a no-confidence motion in Ministers will be moved. After question time, Mr. Umesh Datta Pathak moved a motion of no-confidence against the Hon'ble Mr. R. M. Deshmukh, Minister for agriculture. As many as 37 members supported Mr. Pathak by standing up in their places and leave was granted. The President ruled that the motion should be discussed on the next day.

The 37 members who stood up for the "no-confidence" motion included 18 Swarajists, 8 who resigned from the Nationalist Party, 7 Mahomedans and 4 representing the depressed classes.

Mr. Kedar did not ask for leave to move a similar motion. Mr. Charde, Responsivist had given notice of a no-confidence motion against the Hon'ble Mr. Raghavendra Rao but the President ruled that it could not be taken on that day as it was not received in time.

Great sensation was caused by the "No-confidence motion" against only one Minister as Mr. Pathak had assured the Congressmen that he was moving the "No-confidence motion" against both the Ministers. It was understood that Mr. Pathak had intimated to the President that he would move the "no-confidence motion" against the Hon'ble Mr. Raghavendra Rao if his first motion failed. Congressmen accused Mr. Pathak of having played false with them.

After leave was granted to move the "No-confidence motion" against the Hon'ble Mr. Deshmukh, the Council proceeded with the business on the agenda. The Opium Smoking Bill was postponed as some of the amendments required the sanction of the Government of India. The Settlement Bill was also postponed as the Government was not prepared to proceed with it. At this stage the House was adjourned.

#### RESIGNATION OF MR. DESHMUKH.

On the 18TH AUGUST the first indication of the Hon'ble Mr. Deshmukh's resignation was given by himself who did not take his usual seat.

After question time the Hon'ble Mr. Tambe handed over a communication from the Governor intimating that he has accepted with regret the Hon'ble Mr. Deshmukh's resignation in the morning. Whereupon the President declared that the no-confidence motion against him fell through automatically as Mr. Deshmukh was no longer a minister.

Mr. Pathak then asked for leave to move the no-confidence motion against the Hon'ble Minister Mr. Raghavendra Rao but as only 21 members indicated their support the motion fell through. The House then adjourned till 21st.

On the 21ST AUGUST the resignation of Mr. E. Raghavendra Rao as the Chief Minister was announced in the Council. Intense excitement and surprise was evinced when Mr. Rao leaving Government bench took his seat among the elected members. It was apparent that he had followed suit of his colleague Mr. Ram Rao Deshmukh who resigned on the 18th.

#### Mr. Deshmukh's Statement.

Mr. Ram Rao Deshmukh ex-Minister for agriculture then read a long statement giving reasons which necessitated his resignation as a Minister. In the course of his speech he said :—

"For the last few months it was becoming increasingly difficult for the ministers to pull together, and in view of this it was apparent that both of us could not remain in office and either the one or the other or, as it has happened now, both of us should resign. The only question was who and in what manner. The differences between the ministers were largely, though not entirely, on the question of portfolios. I do not want, Sir, in view of the resignation, which you have just announced to the House, of Mr. Rao, to take this House through the long history that lies behind this, and especially because this was a personal matter between myself and my colleague. But I must state that in the matter of portfolios we have been singularly unfortunate. We had both of us certain difficulties, since gentlemen both on the side of my friend Mr. Rao and myself insisted that Local Self-Government and Education should be given to one and the same minister. Under the circumstances it was not possible for us to divide the portfolios in such a manner as to keep both the subjects with any one minister. We, however, managed to compose our differences and the arrangement proposed by us was, as the house is aware, accepted by His Excellency. Later on, Sir, it happened that my friend Mr. Rao wanted for some reason the Department of Public Works in his portfolio. The reason given to me was that Mr. Rao had certain ideas of a progressive nature which he would like to put into execution if the department was under his charge. As a joint minister in duty bound I was bound to offer him to carry out his ideas which I did. But I did not ultimately come in the possession of those ideas and the matter was dropped at that state. That was, Sir, last year. I had hoped that the trouble was then over, but it was not to be. This year we again had the unfortunate recurrence of the differences and there was some correspondence which I shall not weary the House with by making a mention of. The total up-shot of that correspondence was that we found out that the differences, at least so far as we were concerned, could not be composed. The manner in which I was approached was what I considered to be offensive to the position I held as a joint colleague. There were many alternatives available; there was the alternative either for both of us to resign or pull on till the party chose to decide the matter. All these

alternatives were considered but were found somehow or other to be agreeable. I was in the mean-time endeavouring to get, Sir, reasons for this change; but I must say to my deep regret that I was really not able to see one good reason why there should be a change. My position was that if we did effect a change it must reflect that only such discredit on both of us; if we did change it meant that the amount of time that we have spent in charge of our departments and whatever little experience we might have managed to get during our term of office would be all wasted. But even then, if it was found that there was some substantial reason for which the change was required, no serious objection, at least so far as I was concerned, would have been raised. The last phase of this episode culminated in Mr. Rao asking me either to agree to his proposal or that he would advise His Excellency apparently with a view to get that change imposed on me. I distinctly considered this to be a threat. I could not induce myself to submit. It was impossible, Hon'ble Sir, to put up with dictation or threats and to deal with a situation which involved such scanty courtesy, so far as I was concerned. It was evident since then that any one of us would have to resign any time. I feel, Sir, a sincere regret to have to mention all these facts publicly, as, in my opinion, they will not advance either the cause of any one of us or the cause of the province as a whole. But I did owe a certain explanation to this House as to why this particular difference led to this stage, and I know that this House has been intensely anxious to hear it, and I always thought that it was entitled to hear it.

"I shall not, Sir, at this stage say very much about the difference on certain matters of policy. Many of these matters were ultimately amicably composed and many were still pending when I resigned. I am precluded from saying anything more owing to the sense of responsibility of the office that I had the privilege to hold till recently. It might be the lot of some one who might enter office to-morrow to deal with these matters, and I will leave him to judge of the merits or the demerits of the little that I was striving to do when I was in office.

"A monnet the questions amicably settled I need only refer to the point of nominations to Local Bodies. I need not have had to refer to it at great length but for the fact that special interest is evinced in certain quarters on this subject. It might suffice to say that the principles which were laid down and observed in matters of nominations to Local Bodies were finally incorporated in a Government circular after some discussion. That circular luckily, Sir, is published as Appendix A to the questions for to-day. The position when we entered office was that there were really no definite or defined principles for making nominations. Myself and Mr. Rao have endeavoured to put these nominations on some basis which should be considered to be principles. Whether they are right or wrong, whether they are approved of by the House or not, is really not the question. The question is whether there were any fixed principles on which the consideration of these matters was based. Some principles had to be laid down and during my term of office I have succeeded in laying them down. In order to facilitate the understanding of these principles by this House I will only refer to paragraphs 2 and 3 of the circular referred to above by me. It runs as follows:—

"2. In the first place Government desires to make it clear that it will use the power of nomination conferred upon it, as a means of increasing the efficiency of a committee by the addition of members possessing technical qualifications or specialized experience, and secondly, in order to rectify, as far as is practicable, inequalities in representation resulting from any system of election. In particular, in the present state of the development of the province, Government feels that it owes a special duty to secure due representation of women, of the so-called depressed classes, and of unrepresented but important communities or interests. The making of nominations in the interests of efficiency postulates that the member nominated should be able to devote an adequate portion of his time to municipal affairs. Government has decided, therefore, ordinarily not to nominate anyone who is already a member of a Local Body. This condition should be borne in mind when recommendations are being made.

"3. The policy of Government as regards the nomination of officials has not undergone any serious alteration. As before, officials should not be regarded as debarred from nomination. Indeed, the assistance and advice of officials, whether in active service or retired, of the Educational, Medical and Engineering Departments, may well prove valuable to municipalities. At the same time Government will no longer prescribe that certain officers shall be nominated to particular committees by virtue of their office. In future officials will be nominated by name and it will be left to Commissioners to use their discretion about recommending them in each case. In this connection it should be borne in mind that only such officials should be members of committees as will have

the tact not to get themselves mixed up with party factions. In particular they should not be recommended with a view to swaying the balance in the choice of municipal office bearers."

"That illustrates, Sir, what little in this particular respect I have been trying to do. Every one of the nominations in the Local Self-Government Department was made with the full concurrence of my hon'ble colleague. Delays, if any, were due to the time required to secure a common agreement of all the parties concerned. My difficulty was that I could not ignore the communications made to me by members of all sections of this House either to nominate them or to nominate someone else or to exclude some persons from nomination; I had to enquire into the reasons given by the members of this House before coming to a decision; I had to compare these suggestions with those made by local officers and I had to formulate proposals and secure the concurrence of my colleague. These difficulties I have faced as best as I could, always keeping before me the idea of meeting all reasonable wishes of the members and the public. I have known that the results have not always been the happiest. It was told that a charge against me was made that Musalmans were purposely excluded, but I could point out instances where cases were sent back and suggestions for nominations of Musalman members were called for as no Musalmans were elected to the body concerned. I can say the same thing with equal justification about the depressed classes. Anybody carefully scrutinising the nominations will not fail to see that the principles to which I have already referred were most scrupulously observed, and that there would, in fact, be very few bodies found by way of an exception where a Musalman and a depressed class gentleman is not either an elected, selected or a nominated member.

"I had also used my power to nominate ladies. I do not think, therefore, that on a point of principle this also could be called into question. I have tried to carry out the wishes of this Council in a manner I understood to be the object of the transfer of this power from the local officials to the Local Government. If the judgment of the two ministers placed in the high office by this House had failed to secure confidence, I fail to see what else would secure it. Any minister in charge of this department will be, I am afraid, driven back to the old position of treating the matter as routine and would fall back on the recommendations of the local officials, if for no other reason, for the mere reason of safety. The transfer of the power of nomination to Local Bodies from officers to the Local Government was made to facilitate the wishes of this Council being respected and given effect to. This is the principle, I hold, on which the transfer of the power of nomination to the Local Bodies was made, and this was the object of the change as I understand it. I tried to carry out this principle and object so far as I could. I will not pursue that point any further. It is impossible to satisfy everybody. I shall content myself with the fact that I have done my duty according to my understanding, to the best of my ability. My conscience is clear and it is something worth striving for.

"The next point I wish to deal with is the dwindling away of the Nationalist Party into a minority Party. The question naturally arises whether it was not known that the Nationalist Party had already shrunken into a minority for some time past and, if so, why did the resignation not come earlier? The position about this, which is not known outside, is that although some members had tendered resignations in March last their consideration was postponed till August and even to the last hour, i. e., to the day previous to the opening of this session hopes were held out that members who had receded from the Party would reconsider their decision. On the 14th of this month a meeting of the party was held at which several members, including Mr. Raghavendra Rao, Thakur Chedilal, Rai Bahadur P.C. Bose, Mr. S. S. Bhargava, were present; it was after enquiry from Mr. Rao and myself that the party was assured by the statement of Mr. Rao that no trouble was brewing as Mr. Rao declared that he had nothing to complain of me, and the party unanimously reaffirmed the decision of keeping its ministers in office on joint responsibility as before. In spite of this on the night of 16th, some friends came and re-opened the talk about the change of portfolios. So far as members who had resigned from the party were concerned, this point of change of portfolios should not have been their concern in ordinary course of things. It may have been a point as between the two ministers of office, but so far as the members who had tendered their resignations were concerned, this was never the reason for their resignation.

"At the last moment, when the motion of no-confidence against me was definitely known to be likely to be tabled, then, to come to me and make it a condition that "you either change the portfolios or we would join in the no-confidence motion" is definitely what I consider to hold a loaded pistol at me

and ask me to surrender. I naturally resented this treatment and declined this offer. If there was a grain of self-respect left in me I could not do otherwise. Actually the threat was carried out as it was evident from the fact that some of my best friends stood to support the leave for no-confidence motion against me in this House. This was the first time when, and the first definite overt act of hostility of which my Party and myself had to take notice. The hostility was apparent from the fact that the motion was tabled against me alone. Simultaneously with this, as many as 37 non-official members stood up to support the motion for leave of no-confidence in me. I may take the opportunity of assuring them that I bear no malice towards them for doing so; on the other hand I recognize they were within the constitutional rights in questioning the policy of a minister. But it cannot be gainsaid that coupled with this there was a dwindled party to support me on one side and my colleague on the other. In view of the circumstances even if I had succeeded, as I hoped to do, in defeating the motion of no-confidence, I could not usefully remain in office either with honor to myself or the Council or the departments under my charge. On the morning of the 18th Mr. Rao also resigned the Party. The reason was that some members had given a notice of a motion of want of confidence in him without consulting the party. These gentlemen were partial to me, and tried to befriend me by devising perhaps a counter-check. I feel grateful to them. If they were wrong the party could take action against them, but it did not supply an adequate cause for the resignation from ministry. It was not certain, moreover, at that time that these members would have moved the motion which they had tabled against Mr. Rao; but so far as I was concerned the resignation of Mr. Rao from the Party had only one meaning. In the Party meeting it was decided that I should tender my resignation irrespective of the motion before the House as the Party had not the numerical strength to support its Minister. This decision was in conformity with the policy on which the Party had originally undertaken to form the Ministry. I hope this will satisfy the House as to why the resignation was tendered on the morning of the 18th and not earlier.

"In my resignation I had specifically referred to the motion of no-confidence before the House, and I had said that I was prepared to face the attack on my policy. I had no desire to evade the opposition or to shirk a reply. It was not at all certain at the time of my tendering the resignation that the resignation would be accepted actually before the discussion on the motion of no-confidence came on in this House. It was unfortunate, Sir, that the resignation was accepted and the matter came to an end abruptly. Personally I regret that event very much, and it was a great disappointment to me as it deprived me of the chance that I should ordinarily have got of explaining my position and dispelling such suspicions as may have existed about me. I wish to mention specifically, Sir, that it has been my constant endeavour to pursue a policy free from sectarianism, communalism or territorialism, so far as humanly possible. As an instance of the latter, I need only refer to the fact that even within the limits imposed by the much maligned Sim formulla, I was able to find money to start various works in the Central Provinces in all the departments under my charge, works which had been held up for want of funds for several years.

"There is one more point to which I must refer, and that is the point about the Simon Commission. In spite of all that has been said in the public press as regards my views on the position, I can assure this House that I have carried out the resolution of this House in letter and in spirit. Suffice it to say that I have taken no share whatever in the preparation of any case for the Simon Commission. In conclusion, Sir, I take this opportunity of expressing my gratitude to my colleague on the transferred side for such help in the discharge of my duties as he was able to give and other members of Government for the courtesy with which they treated me during my term of office. I must also thank this House for the help and indulgence they have shown to me during my term of office and I leave them to judge of what I have been able to do while I was in office."

After Mr. Deshmukh had finished his statement the Council proceeded with the non-official business of the House. The Hon'ble Mr. Tambe, leader of the House, expressed that all non-official legislative business relating to the trans-

ferred departments should be given up as there were no Ministers and the only business relating to the Reserved Departments should be taken up. So Mr. the Vaidya's Tenancy (Amendment) Bill was taken up. But while it was under discussion, the House adjourned till the next day as nobody was in a mood to attend to any business.

### Mr. Raghavendra Rao's Statement.

On the 22ND AUGUST interesting revelations were made when the Council met. At the outset Hon. Mr. Raghavendra Rao made the following statement :—

"We accepted our offices on the principle of joint responsibility. Such responsibility involves not only good understanding between the Ministers themselves but imposes certain obligations, of the amenability to the advice of one who forms the ministry. After a year's experience of our working jointly I suggested to Mr. Deshmukh the reshuffling of portfolios in a letter dated 17th March. My colleague did not extend to me the courtesy of replying until he was reminded on the 16th April at Pachmarhi. On the 23rd April I hinted to him that I could not share responsibility of his policy and administration in the Local Self-Government and Public Works departments. On the 6th May I again wrote to him that it was difficult for me to advise His Excellency as his (Mr. Deshmukh's) colleague at a stage when Mr. Deshmukh had finally tendered his formal advice. After I had expressed my own views in cases I also made it plain to him that I did not wish to do anything which might be construed by His Excellency that my colleague had not my support and my party, that I did not stand by him and yet I could not share likely the consequences of advice tendered by him.

"In another letter I wrote what I disliked in his administration was that the Government being influenced on stampeded into action by the local and communal intrigues. Again on the 10th May I warned him of formidable opposition that we have to face on his policy on Local Self-Government Department. Mr. Deshmukh did not consider it advisable to accept my suggestion. I therefore communicated to Mr. Deshmukh and Mr. Khaparde, leader of the party on June 11th of my intention of resigning my office in August. I did not want to desert my colleague and so wrote to His Excellency offering to resign at once if that would facilitate the reconstruction of Ministry. In reply His Excellency took note of my offer and asked me to take over Mr. Deshmukh's portfolio as a temporary measure. He wished that the business of the Council on the transferred side should not be impeded for want of a Minister. On further consideration however I thought necessary to resign at once and wrote to His Excellency. His Excellency then accepted my resignation.

"I emphatically deny the allegation and insinuation made by Mr. Kale that the resignation was tendered on account of the notice. I know as well as the majority of members of this House knows what the fate this motion was destined to meet.

Concluding Mr. Rao said :—"In fairness to myself and my former colleague I wish to say that His Excellency Sir Montagu Butler has consistently interpreted the functions of the Governor in relation to transferred sphere in strictly constitutional manner. I am also obliged to my colleagues in the Executive Government for sympathy and help they have given me and my colleague. I am sure Mr. Deshmukh feels with me that the Secretaries and heads of departments have acted loyally in carrying out our policy and administration".

### Mr. Khaparde's Reply.

After Mr. Rao had finished his statement, Mr. Khaparde while giving a personal explanation admitted of having received Mr. Rao's letter intimating his desire to resign in August but could not place the matter before the Party as that letter was marked confidential.

After this the Council proceeded with the business on the agenda.

### Non-official Bills.

Mr. Vaidya asked for leave to refer his Tenancy Bill to a select committee but was refused, 23 voting for and 33 against. Thakur Chedilal's Land Revenue (amendment) Bill was also referred to a select committee and Mr. Kolhe's

Village Sanitation and Public Management Repealing Bill, Seth Thakurdas's Land Revenue (amendment) Bill, Mr. Jaiswal's Juvenile Smoking Bill, Rao Bahadur Kelkar's Local Self-Government (amendment) Bill, Mr. Jaiswal's Land Alienation (amendment) Bill, Rao Bahadur Kelkar's Tenancy (amendment) Bill, and Mr. Jaiswal's Gond Succession and adoption Bill were introduced before the Council was prorogued by His Excellency the Governor.

## Break-up of the Ministry.

### Mr. Khaparde's Statement.

The following statement was subsequently issued by Mr. B. G. Khaparde Leader of the C. P. Council Nationalist Party, with the approval of his Party, in connection with the motion of no-confidence against the Ministers and resignation of Mr. R. M. Deshmukh :—

"The public are aware that the C. P. Council Nationalist Party consisting of Responsivists of Berar and C. P. Marathi, Independent Congressmen (from C. P. Hindi Districts) and Independents was formed in January 1927. The Party undertook the responsibility of forming a Ministry on the principle of joint responsibility as it was the dominant party in the Council. The Ministers, Hon. Mr. Raghavendra Rao and Mr. R. M. Deshmukh, jointly worked till recently. They had, by agreement, divided the portfolios between themselves. For some reasons yet not known, Mr. Raghavendra Rao requested Mr. Deshmukh to transfer certain departments to him. The demand was repeated from time to time orally and by letters in an offensive manner, without any cause being assigned for doing so. Mr. Deshmukh resisted the demand for want of any adequate reasons. Mr. Deshmukh offered to place the dispute before the Party and abide by the decision, which Mr. Rao refused to do. The insistence of Mr. Rao assumed the form of threats and Mr. Rao expressed that either he would advise H. E. the Governor to relieve him of his duties or arrange to bring a vote of no confidence against Mr. Deshmukh, and even added that he would even be justified in getting the arrangement effected through His Excellency without Mr. Deshmukh's consent. Soon after this, and, while this dispute was going on, resignations from Mr. Rao's friends began to arrive, evidently with a view to deplete the strength of the Party. The last resignation of this kind arrived from Thakur Chedilal, the Deputy Leader of the Party, on the first day of the current session. Mr. Rao wrote confidential letters to the Leader of the Party in one of which he intimated him that he was going to resign in August. The Leader wrote back and asked his permission to place the matter before the Party as he could not do so without his leave, the letter having been marked 'confidential.' Mr. Rao wrote back and refused the permission.

"The Leader called a meeting of the Party to consider the situation and also to consider the advisability of continuing the policy of joint responsibility of the Ministers. The meeting was held on 14th instant, i. e., a day previous to the beginning of the present session. In this meeting Mr. Rao declared that the policy of joint responsibility was to be continued and that he had nothing to complain of against his colleague. No danger was therefore seen ahead.

"Mr. Umesh Dutta Pathak, friend of Mr. Rao, had published his intention of tabling a motion of no-confidence against both the Ministers on a constitutional issue, namely, that the Ministers should resign, as their supporting Party was no longer dominant. The Party was under the impression that the motion will be easily defeated by the combined efforts of the Party and the friends of Mr. Rao who had seceded from the Party. This belief of the Party was confirmed by the fact that the seceding friends of Mr. Rao had agreed to reconsider their resignations. To the intense surprise of the Party, it was found that Mr. Pathak tabled only one motion against only one Minister, Mr. Deshmukh, on the 17th. Mr. Pathak's Swarajist supporters were equally surprised at this. Mr. Charde immediately gave notice of a motion of no-confidence against Mr. Rao in hurry before the business of the day had commenced in the hands of President, but it was ruled out as not being in time. The Leader of the Party requested the

President on the floor of the House to take the motion against Mr. Deshmukh into consideration on the first working day of the next week as it was sprung as a surprise upon the Party. Unfortunately, the President fixed the next day, i.e., Saturday for discussing the motion. The analysis of the number of members, excluding the Swarajists, standing to support the leave of the House for the motion being moved, clearly showed that it was a pre-meditated and designed attack by the Hindi-speaking members against the Marathi-speaking members with the assistance of the Muhammadans and Depressed Classes. We, therefore, tried our utmost to avert this unseemly and unjustifiable exhibition on the floor of the House. Mischievous propaganda was being carried on in papers simultaneously to prejudice Mr. Deshmukh and Responsivists in Berar.

"Negotiations about reconciliation followed in which the Leader of the Party was given to understand through some of the fast friends of Mr. Rao that all trouble would cease and Mr. Pathak would be induced to withdraw the motion of no-confidence if portfolios were exchanged. This proposal spoke for itself and it clearly indicated the source of the motion. Mr. Deshmukh, however, refused to yield to threats and chose to face the motion of no-confidence. Mr. Deshmukh has ever been confident and the Party agree with him that there could possibly be nothing that could be urged with a semblance of reason against him. On the morning of 18th the Nationalist Party decided that both the Ministers should resign on account of the depletion of the strength of the Party irrespective of the success or failure of the motion in the Council and requested Mr. Deshmukh to send in his resignation and face the motion of no confidence. When the meeting of the Party was being held on the 18th, the notice of which was served on Mr. Rao, his resignation of his membership of the Party arrived, and a little later the Leader was given to understand by Mr. Rao's friends that Mr. Rao was resigning his ministership. Mr. Rao's resignation of the membership of the Party having been accepted, it was concluded that consistently with faith and honour involved in the assumption of office on the principle of joint responsibility, Mr. Rao would resign his ministership as his colleague was resigning. Mr. Deshmukh's resignation was accordingly sent to the Government House. A solemn compact followed between Mr. Rao's friends and the Leader of the Party with the consent of the prominent members and sympathisers of the Party to the effect that in case a motion of no confidence was moved against either Minister, it should be defeated by combined effort of the Party and Rao's friends. The sitting of the Council was to commence at 12. This arrangement was arrived at, at about 11-30 when Mr. Deshmukh had gone to the Government House in response to a call from H. E. the Governor for discussing his resignation. Mr. Rajurkar, a member of the Party, had accompanied him to the Government House. While there Mr. Rajurkar met Mr. Rao and Mr. Rao repeated to him that since Mr. Deshmukh had resigned, he was going to do the same as in honour bound.

"After the Council met at 12 and the question time was over, the Leader of the House handed over to the President a communication from H. E. the Governor to the effect that Mr. Deshmukh's resignation was accepted, which was read out to the House and the President declared that the motion of no-confidence against Mr. Deshmukh had abated. The motion tabled by Mr. Umesh Dutta Pathak against Mr. Rao, just a few minutes before the Council met, was put before the House and leave for moving the same was asked. The Nationalist Party did not lend support to it as they and Rao's friends had agreed not to support any motion of the kind against either Minister as aforesaid and thus the motion fizzled out. The Party finds that Mr. Rao did not resign nor are there any indications of his doing so. The Nationalist Party behaved honourably in preventing the vote of no-confidence against Mr. Rao, which beyond doubt could have been brought before the House by merely supplying one vote more. It is worth noting that Mr. Pathak could score the support of Swarajists for his no-confidence motion against Mr. Deshmukh on a clear undertaking to bring in a similar motion against Mr. Rao and the motion brought by him against Mr. Rao was simply to fulfil the obligation, technically, and not to injure Mr. Rao, as he was fully conscious of the terms of the pact arrived at between the two parties.



"It is for Mr. Rao to vindicate the much professed principle of joint responsibility. It is for him to see and for the world to judge whether he is justified in clinging to the office after the resignation of his colleague and after a clear demonstration in the House that the Party, on whose sufferance he assumed office, was not a dominant party in the House and of which he had ceased to be a member. Honour, sagacity, and dignity are on our side; it is for the public to judge whether deception and intrigue against one's colleague are worth the benefits even of a ministry".

#### Dr. Khare's Statement.

Dr. Khare, a Congress member of the Council issued the following to the press:

"The very day on which the conglomeration styled as Nationalists in the Council was brought into being merely to set up a ministry without any principle, policy or programme it had become evident that this party would soon see its end. Self-seekers who had joined the party to gain their ends dropped out as soon as they found themselves unable to attain their objects. Thus the party gradually dwindled. Now the party consists of an insignificant coterie consisting of supporters of only one minister Mr. Ramrao Deshmukh. The other minister Mr. Raghavendra Rao formed an alliance with the pro-Government Musalman group and nominated members in the Council and threatened his colleague to part with his portfolio of public works on pain of overthrow. In spite of a resolution of the Council to have nothing to do with the Simon Commission, material was collected in the transferred departments of the Ministers who, as Government admitted in an answer to interpellations, not only did nothing to prevent this but allowed the whole thing. Their secretaries were, under the very nose of the Ministers, doing all necessary to prepare the Simon case of the Government on the Transferred side. As soon as this admirable non-co-operation-cum-co-operation on the part of the Ministers was brought to light and exposed from public platforms by the Congressmen like Mr. Abhyankar and Dr. Khare, the public began to ask inconvenient questions. Seeing this, at the instance of Dr. Moonje, two Responsivists, in order to save their party from further exposure and disgrace, issued a circular letter to members of their party saying that it was desirable for the Ministers to resign on the Simon issue. The Nationalist party, however, decided against this proposal in the letter with the result that the signatories of the circular letter resigned from the party.

"The behaviour of the Nationalists as among themselves, barrenness of policy of the Ministers, their abject surrender to the reserved half of the Government and lastly their dishonest attitude towards the question of boycott of the Commission, all these together undermined the position of the Responsivists and the Independent Congress party. To save this party from a debacle, Dr. Moonje hurried to the press. After first declaring that his Ministers were selfless and patriotic and ready to resign any moment, ultimately asked them to resign. As is well-known, the Ministers treated Dr. Moonje's advice with contempt and turned him down. As the sitting of the Council was drawing near, things were taking definite shapes. Minister Mr. Raghavendra Rao gave his colleague an ultimatum to transfer public works department to him as his men had become restive or to face a vote of no-confidence. Minister Mr. Deshmukh did not submit to the threat and the motion of no-confidence against him was moved on the 17th August in support of which, as many as 37 members rose including some Nationalists and the whole Congress party. The House consists of 73 members including the President.

"A motion of no-confidence was also tabled against Minister Rao but on technical grounds they were not admitted that day. In pursuance of the advice of his friends both from Berar and Nagpur, Mr. Deshmukh resigned on the morning of 18th to avoid discussion on the censure motion and hoping that Mr. Rao would thus be compelled to resign on account of joint responsibility. But Mr. Deshmukh's friends had underestimated Mr. Rao's politics. Mr. Rao's party at once made overtures to Mr. Deshmukh's party for a compromise which

resulted in an agreement whereby Mr. Deshmukh's party would not table a censure motion against Mr. Rao and also refuse support to the Independent members' similar motion which was likely to be made and thus leave Mr. Rao unscathed while in return Mr. Rao's party would manage to have the motion against Mr. Deshmukh defeated when it would be put to the vote of the House. They expected that Mr. Deshmukh's resignation would not be accepted in the meanwhile. Thus both the ministers would be saved and would retain office and the Congress party would be defeated. But immediately after question time on the 17th, a communication of Governor's acceptance of Mr. Deshmukh's resignation came in like a bombshell on the heads of the supporters of Mr. Deshmukh and when an Independent member asked for leave to make a motion of no-confidence in Mr. Rao supporters of Mr. Deshmukh lost their heads and did not stand in support of the leave pleading that they were bound to honour their pact with Mr. Rao's men when in fact consideration for the pact had vanished. Thus 21 members including the whole Congress party stood in support of the motion against Mr. Rao with the result that the motion failed for want of one vote and Mr. Rao was that day saved from the doom similar to his colleague.

"It was this agreement of self-preservation between the two groups which defeated the motion and not any love for Mr. Rao. Immediately after the Council rose, it dawned on the supporters of Mr. Deshmukh that Mr. Rao's party had done the dirty on them as Mr. Rao's supporters began saying that as the House had indirectly expressed confidence in Mr. Rao, it was not necessary for him to resign on the score of joint responsibility. 19th and 20th which were holidays, were employed by the supporters of Mr. Deshmukh to engineer overthrow of Mr. Rao. As many as 8 motions of no-confidence were tabled on the 20th which, with the support of 18 Congressmen more made up the number required to obtain leave. Mr. Rao and company canvassed hard but to no purpose. They even went to the length of beseeching the Congress party leader in Council to hold his hand. When Mr. Rao saw that more than half the House was ready to turn him out of office, he resigned a couple of hours before the Council sat on the 21st. The ministers did not resign on any difference of policy or Simon Commission issue. It was a selfish quarrel amongst themselves regarding distribution of portfolios that brought about their humiliation. Both of them and many others are still hankering for office and the new parties on personal and private grounds are being formed. This episode once more completely proves that diarchy is unworkable".

## New Ministry Formed.

After the C. P. Council was prorogued, H. E. Sir Montagu Butler interviewed Mr. Raghavendra Rao, leader of the democratic party, and Mr. B. G. Khaparde, leader of the Nationalist party, more than once with a view to ascertaining the strength of each party regarding the formation of a new Ministry. Mr. Khaparde conveyed to the Governor that a Ministry formed by either party would not be stable without a combination of the other party. Mr. Raghavendra Rao was then invited to form a Ministry and he accepted office again. The following official communique was issued on the 25th August:—

"In fulfilment of the undertaking given in his message to the Legislative Council on the 22nd August, His Excellency has been in communication with the leaders of the Democratic and the Nationalist Parties as constituted subsequent to the break-up of the late ministry. His Excellency has satisfied himself that both the parties are in favour of the formation of a ministry but are not agreed as to who should be the ministers. In the circumstances he has invited Mr. Raghavendra Rao as the leader of the two parties to form a ministry and to propose a colleague. Mr. Raghavendra Rao has accepted His Excellency's offer".

Subsequently on the 11th September another Government communique was issued of which the following is the text:—

"In the communique, dated 25th August 1928, it was announced that His Excellency the Governor had invited Mr. Raghavendra Rao, as the leader of the larger of the two parties desiring a Ministry, to be Chief Minister, and to propose a colleague. The Hon. Mr. Raghavendra Rao has now proposed to His Excellency that Mr. Tukaram Jairam Kedar be appointed as his colleague. His Excellency has accepted this proposal. The Hon. Mr. Tukaram Jairam Kedar was sworn in as Minister on Monday morning at Government House.

"At the request of his Ministers, His Excellency the Governor has re-distributed subjects in the portfolios of Education and Agriculture. The Hon. Mr. Raghavendra Rao will take the portfolio of Education, which will include the major subjects of Education, Public Health and Sanitation, Local Self-Government and Public Works.

"The Hon. Mr. Tukaram Jairam Kedar will take the portfolio of Agriculture, which will include the major subjects of Agriculture, Civil Veterinary Department, Co-operative Societies, Industries and Excise".

## The Burma Legislative Council.

The last session of the second Burma Legislative Council commenced at Rangoon on the 6TH AUGUST 1928, the Hon. Mr. Oscar de Glanville presiding. The day was devoted to official business which included the Bill to amend the Indian Stamp Act in its application to Burma and the presentation of the Public Accounts Committee Report. The only item of interest was the confirmation of the draft order moved by the Education Minister regarding the supersession of the District Council Joint School Board of Kyaukse in Upper Burma. This evoked a lively debate and, pressed to a division, was passed by a large majority.

Several members of the People's Party opposed the confirmation of the order pressing for a fresh election. Mr. Paw Tun, Deputy President criticised the Government's action as very drastic and remarked that in view of the Simon Commission's visit to Burma, such action was sure to mislead so far as rural bodies were concerned. The Finance Member remarked that it was proper and judicious as the District Council Members failed to control the staff and discharge their duties properly.

Forty-six voted for and twenty-three against the motion.

### Preparation of Electoral Rolls.

On the 8TH AUGUST, after question time, Mr. S. A. S. Tyabji begged leave to introduce his adjournment motion to consider a matter of grave importance and urgency, namely, the preparation of electoral rolls for the forthcoming elections and the question of Government officers favouring any particular party.

The Finance Member opined that the matter was not urgent and said that no specified instances had been given that the electoral rolls were not being prepared or that Government officers were favouring any party. The burden of proof rested upon the mover and he has not discharged his duty adequately.

The President admitted that the matter was of urgency as the elections were due on November 9, but asked for grounds to show grave importance.

Mr. Tyabji, the mover, said that neither time nor sufficient facilities had been given to the public to object to the methods of preparing the rolls.

The Home Member said that there was plenty of time for filing the objections, but denied that the principles for the preparation of rolls had not been properly applied not only in Rangoon, but all over the province.

The President, after taking the opinion of the House, fixed 4 p.m. for the discussion of the motion.

At 4 p.m. Mr. Tyabji moved his adjournment motion and described how the electoral rolls were being prepared. He pointed out the difficulties in testing the accuracies in the application forms, especially the preliminary roll being handwritten copies were unavailable. He showed various defects and said that the rolls were being not prepared properly and said that the time was insufficient for filing the objections.

The Judicial Secretary, opposing, said that so far no representation had been made to Government regarding the electoral rolls. If the rolls were now printed the time for objections would have to be extended. But that could be arranged. If the local Government had been addressed in the matter the time of the Council had not been wasted. As regards the charge against Government of interfering with the elections the Judicial Secretary said that a circular was issued to the Commissioners during the last elections asking officials not to take part in them and this year also the circular would be circulated in time. If instances of such letters by officials were brought to the notice of Government suitable action would be taken.

Several members supporting the motion pointed out the various defects in the rolls and the difficulties in filing the objections for want of time, while one member asked for an extension of the time.

The Home Member repeated that regarding the preparation of the electoral rolls no complaints had so far been made to Government. He said that the rolls would not be printed and he could agree to the extension of a week's time for Rangoon only, not outside, for filing the objections.

After nearly two hours' debate the motion was pressed to a division and lost by a majority of 18 votes. The Council then adjourned.

On the 9TH AUGUST, after interpellations, Mr. E. G. Marracan from Akyab moved an adjournment of the House to consider the recent cattle epidemic which has caused a great loss to cultivators in Akyab and the urgent necessity for providing agricultural loans.

The Finance Member said that the Government had sympathy for such resolution. He quoted facts and figures to show the extent of cattle disease and the present situation and said that the Government were taking appropriate measures to relieve the situation.

He held that there was no urgent necessity for granting loans as suggested.

The President held the motion in order and fixed 4 p. m. for the discussion.

#### Abolition of Duty.

The debate on the resolution on the early abolition of the export duty on rice being resumed several members spoke in favour of its abolition.

The resolution was carried without division, the officials remaining neutral.

#### Bribery in Rangoon Port Trust.

Mr. E. P. Pillay moved his resolution recommending the appointment of a committee of officials and non-officials of the Council to inquire into and report on the widespread system of bribery in the Rangoon Port Trust as disclosed in the recent defamation cases and referred to the High Court Judges in the appeal of Reddy versus Oenme and make such recommendations as may be necessary to make the recurrence of such things impossible in the future. He said that the reason in bringing this resolution was a desire to see all public and semi-public services in the Province freed from the charge of bribery and corruption now levelled against some of them. After dilating on the facts and quoting the Judge's remarks Mr. Pillay observed that such an appointment would perhaps only involve the Province in expenditure.

The Finance Member opposing the resolution said that the first question was to take action against the individuals employed by the Port Trust who had taken the bribes and to improve the system of administration so as to make bribe-taking impossible.

With reference to the changes effected from 1921 in respect of administration and the system of labour supplied to wharves and jetties and those supplied to the Commissioners, the speaker thought that members would agree that the subject of inquiry included all the points.

One Burman member opposed the resolution while several non-official Indians and Burmans supported it. Further discussion was postponed till next day.

## Cattle Epidemic in Akyab.

At 4 p.m. Mr. Marracan moved his adjournment motion. Mr. Tun, another Akyab member, described the serious situation there due to the loss of cattle. He accused the Government of callousness in this respect.

The Finance Member after debating the main causes for the present situation said that the Commission's report of the situation was under consideration and that steps were being taken by a Commissioner to relieve it.

He assured the House that any amount asked for by the Commissioner would be sanctioned. The mover agreed to withdraw the motion at the request of the Finance Members but the Home Member objected.

The President put the motion to the House and it was negatived, 20 voting for and 35 against. The Council was then adjourned.

## Bribery in Rangoon Port Trust.

On the 10TH AUGUST the discussion on Mr. Pillai's resolution was resumed.

The Finance Member, replying, said that he desired to remove a possible misunderstanding in regard to what he said about the scope of the inquiry by the Committee appointed by the Port Commissioners, which was to be extended from the period 1922 to the present time. The main burden of non-official members' speeches was that the Port Commissioners were not anxious to bring the whole matter to light. That was a case of misapprehension, which should be removed. It was for the Council to consider whether there were reasonable grounds for the fear, and whether those grounds were based on substantial facts. The House ought not to listen to rumours. The source of information on which the defamation cases were based was the books produced by a gentleman interested in labour contract.

The Port Commissioners were desirous of bringing bribery and corruption to light. There was a senior Government Official, Mr. C. W. Dunn, on the committee appointed by them, and Government had confidence in him. The Port Commissioners were taking action against the officials concerned. He, therefore, asked the mover to withdraw the resolution.

The resolution was pressed to a division and lost, 21 voting for and 38 against.

## Prohibition on Gambling.

Mr. U Pe Aung moved a resolution recommending that prohibitory order be passed to stop gambings and suppress gambling parties in Moulmein during festivals.

Mr. Nicholas, Judicial Secretary, opposing the resolution remarked that there was no necessity of such prohibitory order but the imposition of the gambling act.

Mr. Tyabji amended the resolution substituting the word "Moulmein" for Burma and referred to gambling and the University Endowment Fund.

The Home Member opposed and both the original and amended resolutions were lost without division.

Another resolution of provincial interest having been discussed and lost the Council then adjourned.

On the 11TH AUGUST, after several additional supplementary grants were passed discussion was taken up on the Public Accounts Committee's report on the audit and appropriation reports for the year 1925-26.

Mr. Tyabji moved. This Council is not satisfied that the normal revenue is sufficient to meet the normal expenditure of the province and the Council desires to draw the attention of the Government to the large future programme of civil works and the effect thereof on the future legislature.

The Finance Secretary observed that the motion was unnecessary and premature while the Finance Member said that Government were unable to accept the motion which was not in order. Besides, the matter was again under examination by a Committee.

Mr. Tyabji's motion was lost without a division.

The Finance Member then introduced the Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to the appointment of Financial Commissioners in Burma and for a definition of their functions, and moved for its consideration.

Mr. U. Pu, ex-Minister, opposed the Bill on principle because of the high pay and referred to the conditions of the paddy market.

The Revenue Secretary said that it was essential to have two Financial Commissioners to cope with the work and for smooth and efficient administration.

The motion for consideration was carried, 30 voting for and 9 against. On the Finance Member's motion the Bill was passed without further discussion. The Council was there-after prorogued.

# The Assam Legislative Council.

The autumn session of the Assam Legislative Council commenced at Shillong on the 17TH SEPTEMBER 1928.

The first resolution moved on this day was one recommending the Government to remove the existing disparity in the matter of minimum assessment of land revenue on an estate at present prevailing in two valleys by fixing the uniform standard of eight annas.

Mr. Kameswar Das, the mover, pointed out that in Sylhet the minimum assessment was eight annas while in the Assam Valley it was Re. 1, and said that since it could not be held that the Assam Valley raiyats holding small leases were rich the minimum should be reduced to eight annas.

Hon. A. W. Botham on behalf of the Government said that the disparity in the minimum assessments in the two valleys was due to historical reasons. One reason for imposing the minimum assessment was by way of discouraging the breaking-up of minute portions of land. It was also to be considered that every separate account increased the work of compiling and maintaining records and collecting revenue and when it was remembered that revenue represented land revenue and rent combined and that it was all the cultivator paid for his land he did not think Re. 1 was excessive and accordingly opposed the resolution.

After further discussion the Council by a majority carried the resolution.

The question of transfer of Sylhet to Bengal came up again to-day when Khan Bahadur Hazi Bakht Majumdar moved a resolution recommending the Government to represent to the poorer authorities that the people of Sylhet and Cachar do not seek the transfer to Bengal.

Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Kutubuddin Ahmad on behalf of the Government supporting the resolution said that the Government were not convinced that it was the general wish of the people of Sylhet to go to Bengal. The masses of people were indifferent while the educated Mahomedan opinion was against the transfer.

The discussion on the resolution had not concluded when the Council rose for the day.

On the 18TH SEPTEMBER, on the motion of Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Kutubuddin Ahmad, the Council passed the Assam High Ways Bill introduced to meet the difficulty which now exists of controlling traffic on provincial roads in Assam. Officers in charge of provincial roads have hitherto been hampered by want of legal authority in maintaining and carrying out the work essential for the upkeep and improvement of roads in their charge and the bill provided that their action shall have the support of law.

## Separation of Sylhet.

After passing a small demand for excess grant for 1926-27 and adopting the report of the Public Accounts Committee on the Audit and Appropriation Report for 1926-27 the Council resumed the discussion on the resolution regarding the transfer of Sylhet and Cachar to Bengal. To the main resolution Babu Basanta Kumar Das moved an amendment to the effect that the opinion of the people of Sylhet and Cachar, paying chankidari and municipal rates, should be taken and represented to the proper authorities.

Mr. A. W. Botham pointed out the inconsistency of the members who now asked to ascertain public opinion by a referendum of observing that last time the Council passed a resolution on the same subject and they were satisfied with the Council's verdict and there was no talk of referendum. He also pointed out that the intention of the Secretary of State to refer the matter to the Statutory Commission was published only a few months before the last general election and it seemed to him incredible that members returned at that election should not represent the opinion of those who voted for them on the important subject which was obviously before the minds of public at that time.

Muhammadan members generally spoke in favour of retention of the districts in Assam and twitted the Swarajists with inconsistency in the matter while the Swarajists and a few other Hindu members also were in favour of amendment proposing referendum on the question.

Replying to the charge of inconsistency of the Swarajists, Srijut Nabin Chandra Bar-nai said that with the change of circumstances the Government also had changed views, formerly the Government were not satisfied that the decision of the Council represented

the true public opinion but now they were satisfied to adopt the Council's opinion in the matter. He also pointed out that the resolution wanted that the opinion of the people of the districts should be communicated to proper authorities. The amendment deserved support as it suggested the means of getting that opinion. With regard to the suggestion that if Sylhet were transferred to Bengal, Assam might lose the status as a major province, he said that he had no fears as he did not see any reason why Assam should not remain a major province even without Sylhet.

After further discussion the amendment was negatived by 29 votes against 12 and the original motion recommending retention of Sylhet and Cachar in Assam was carried.

On the 19TH SEPTEMBER the Council was occupied with the discussion of resolutions. One recommending that all local boards, wishing to employ an Executive Officer, should be provided by Government with the necessary funds for his salary which should be limited to Rs. 7,200 per annum for each Local Board and another recommending that an air survey should be made of all forest reserve lands in Assam, were withdrawn after discussion; while a third, recommending that the pay of lower primary teachers should be increased to afford them a fair living, was carried.

The next resolution, recommending that the realisation of Government demands at the newly assessed rates resulting from recent and current settlement operations in Kamrup, Sibsagar, Nowgong and Darrang be postponed until proper legislation on the subject of re-assessment of land revenue was enacted and brought into force was being discussed when the Council rose for the day.

On the 20TH SEPTEMBER the motion for the reduction of Rs. 5,000 under Civil Works was carried by the casting vote of the president.

#### Municipal Amendment Bill.

On the 21ST SEPTEMBER Hon'ble Mr. J. J. M. Nichols Roy, Minister, introduced the Assam Municipal Amendment Bill. The main object of the Bill was to provide that save in municipalities which might be specially notified the annual value of holding which contained very expensive buildings should be on the reduced scale with the necessary consequence that taxes which were calculated on the annual value would similarly be on the reduced scale. There were few such holdings in towns in Assam except those containing large Government institutions such as schools or colleges and Government considered that taxes which might at present be imposed on such holdings were excessive and were unfair burden on the general tax-payer.

Rules under the Assam Primary Education Act were also laid before the Council by the Hon'ble Sir Muhammad Saadulla, Education Minister.

Having got through the business allotted for the day in an hour the Council adjourned.

On the 22ND SEPTEMBER, after a lengthy debate the Council passed, by 21 votes against 20, a non-official resolution recommending that the realisation by the Government of revenue demands at the newly assessed rates in Kamrup, Sibsagar, Nowgong and Darrang be postponed until proper legislation regarding reassessment of land revenue is enacted and brought into force.

*The Council was then prorogued.*

## The B. & O. Legislative Council

(Continued from Vol. I, p. 368).

#### Censure Motion on Excise Commissioner.

The Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council re-assembled at Patna on the 21ST FEBRUARY, after a week's adjournment to discuss the budget for 1928-1929. Swarajist mem-

Raj Bahadur Dwarka Nath, on their behalf, asked leave to move the adjournment of the House to discuss a matter of definite public importance, namely, the expression of opinion by Mr. Berthoud, Commissioner of Excise and Salt on the Bihar and Orissa Mica Bill, which was recently rejected by the Council on the second reading.

The expression used by the Excise Commissioner, and to which objection was taken by the Swarajists was as follows :—"I do not believe the bill will pass through the Council, owing to the fact that the vast majority of individuals and firms engaged in the mica trade are interested in stolen mica." Leave was given by the Council.

Five members including Messrs. Chandeshwar Prasad, Narayan Singh, Mabarak Ali, Rajandhari Singh and S. M. Naim participated in the general discussion of the budget. Members drew attention to the disappointing features of the budget, and complained that the nation-building departments were practically starved.

Rai Bahadur Dwarkanath then moved his adjournment motion. He said that he stood for freedom of expression; but opinion must be expressed in language of moderation and sobriety. Mr. Berthoud had gone out of his way to cast a slur upon the members of the House. Every member, irrespective of the party to which he belonged, ought to be jealous of the liberty and honour of this House. As long as an apology was not forthcoming from Mr. Berthoud, he would not be satisfied.

The Hon'ble Mr. Sifton, of behalf of the Government, explained what he considered was first and last a misunderstanding. He denied that it was a reflection on the Council. On the other hand, it was a broad reflection on the trade as a whole. He stated that he enquired from Mr. Berthoud, what his meaning was. Mr. Berthoud had no idea of making any imputation on the good faith of the members of the Council. He hoped that, in view of the explanation and assurance given, the motion would be withdrawn.

The adjournment motion, when put to vote, was declared carried, the Government not challenging a division. The result was greeted with cheers by the Swarajists. The Council then adjourned.

On the 22ND FEBRUARY general discussion on the budget was brought to a close with the replies of the Hon. Ministers and the Hon. the Finance Member to the criticisms advanced by the members.

The House was very thin, and the meeting was very short, lasting only an hour. The Hon. the Ministers appreciated the criticisms regarding their departments, and assured the Council that they would give their careful consideration to them. They also complained that funds were inadequate to their needs.

The Hon. the Maharaja Bahadur of Dumraon, Finance Member, stated that he shared with the members their disappointment at the budget. He maintained that the Transferred Departments have had their fair share of funds, since the introduction of the Reforms in this province. The distribution of money was not done by the Finance Department alone, but by the Government as a whole. He wished more funds were available to meet the needs of the rural population, which the members desired so much.

The Council adjourned till 9th March, when voting on the budget demands commenced.

### VOTING ON GRANTS.

The Council re-assembled on the 9TH MARCH to vote on Budget grants. The Council discussed a number of motions for reduction in the demand for land revenue administration. Mr. Godavaris Misra (Swarajist) moved a token cut of Rs. 100 in the provision for the management of Government Estates. He called attention to certain grievances of the people in Puri District in the matter of the enhancement of rent. He pointed out that the holdings were uneconomic and the people were not in a position to pay the enhanced rent. Before the Hon. Mr. Sifton could reply on behalf of Government the Council adjourned.

On the 10TH MARCH the Council voted the Budget demand of Rs. 26,47,717 to defray the charges during the next year in respect of land revenue. The Swarajists attended the Council and moved a number of token cuts to raise questions of policy.

The Hon. Mr. Sifton, leader of the House, replying on behalf of Government to the point raised by Mr. Godavaris Misra regarding the enhancement of rent in the Government Estate of Puri district, pointed out that Government had all along adopted a liberal policy in regard to the assessment of rent from the tenants and repudiated the allegation of the local officers applying coercion in the matter.

All the motions of cuts were either withdrawn or rejected by the Council after discussion.

Mr. Baldeva Sahay (Swarajist), moving a token cut of Rs. 100 in the demand under "Excise", attacked the excise policy of Government and asked the Excise Minister to abandon the present policy which he considered would neither lead them towards the goal of total prohibition nor bring about a substantial reduction in the consumption of liquor. He suggested that the Excise Minister should either select one particular area



for total drying up and then extend this experiment or adopt the system of trying local option.

The Excise Minister, replying, said that he had already selected two areas in this province for total drying up and was watching the result of this experiment. If the experiment was found to be successful he would extend it to other parts provided the tendency of the people seemed to be towards temperance. He pointed out that the revenue of the province was small and any loss in revenue would affect them.

Mr. Jagat Narayan Lal and other members also participated in the discussion and criticised the policy. The discussion was not concluded when the Council adjourned.

On the 12TH MARCH several non-official members, speaking on a token cut in the Excise demand, criticised the policy of the Government and suggested that the Government should adopt a policy which would gradually lead towards temperance and prohibition.

The Secretary, Local Self-Government Department, replying pointed out that the policy of total prohibition was tried many times in many countries, but was found to be unworkable. He emphasised the difficulties in the way of the adoption of such a policy and particularly, those of finance. The province could not afford to drop the whole of the excise revenue all on a sudden. He maintained that the Government was consistently and uniformly following the policy of maximum revenue and minimum consumption.

The Excise Minister said that the Government were following the policy of temperance subject to such limitations as were placed in their way. He assured the Council that he would examine the suggestion of selecting a few areas for "drying up" as an experimental measure.

The reduction motion was withdrawn. The Council then voted the whole of the Excise demand and also demands under Stamps and Forests without any opposition.

#### Registration Grant.

On the 13TH MARCH there was a heated discussion when the demand under "Registration" came up for discussion.

Mr. Jagat Narain Lal (Independent Congress) moving a reduction motion, asserted that the Hindus were not justly treated in the matter of appointments in the Registration Department. He, on his own responsibility, narrated some cases of partiality and corruption among the Moslem officers in the Registration Department.

Mr. Narayan Singh (Swarajist) and others supported the motion.

The Moslem members, led by Mr. Abdul Aziz and Mr. Mahomed Jan, deplored the fact that the note of communal discord should have been struck in the course of the debate. Mr. Aziz said that when it was their desire to administer their own country, it would not be proper for them to indulge too freely in accusing one community or the other of communal prejudice and partiality. It was not desirable to condemn the Moslem officers and the Moslem Minister without the least justification.

The Minister-in-charge of the Registration Department emphatically repudiated that partiality was shown to any particular community. Communal considerations, he said, had never entered his mind and he had tried to be strictly fair to all communities. He promised to look into the charges that were made against some officers of the department.

The cut motion was ultimately withdrawn, and the Council voted the whole of the demand under Registration.

The Council also carried a token cut of Re. 1 in respect of the Irrigation Demand.

On the 14TH MARCH discussion was raised regarding the temporary appointment of Justice Sir Basanta Kumar Mullick as a member of the Executive Council, in the place of the Maharaja of Durnraon, who was proceeding on four months' leave from next month, by means of a token cut in the demand for the Executive Council. Non-official members took objection to the appointment on the ground that at least one member of the Executive Council should be a non-official Indian, and that in the interest of the purity of the judicial administration, no High Court Judge should be appointed to the Executive Councilorships.

The Government replied that there were precedents in which High Court Judges had been appointed to the Executive Council. As the appointment was temporary, there was no question of departure from the principle as suggested. In the case of temporary appointments, officials were appointed in other provinces as well. Apart from precedents, it was difficult to believe that High Court Judges could be induced to show prejudice in favour of the Executive Government in the prospect of getting executive appointments. He assured the Council that it was never the intention of the Government to officialise the post. The Government was defeated on the motion by 50 votes to 43.

## Recruitment to Provincial Services.

On the 15TH MARCH the question of recruitment to the provincial services by competitive examinations was raised in the Council.

Mr. Krishna Ballabh Sahay (Swarajist) moving a reduction motion urged that method of recruitment to the provincial services should be by competitive examination. He also suggested reservation of seats for various communities.

Mr. Briscoe, Chief Secretary, replying on behalf of the Government doubted if it was right to raise such an important principle under a budget motion. It was not clear to him if the mover had consulted and was representing the views of his constituents in the matter. The mover ought really to have raised the question by means of a formal resolution. He pointed out that pure competition would not fit in with special representation of various communities, whose claims had to be taken into account in the matter of the provincial services. The mover by leaving the details to the Government had thrust on them a most extraordinary and difficult and invidious task, which would eventually lead to bickerings without end. It was not possible to introduce the system of competition. The Government had no reason to suppose that the existing system of election was not considered generally to be satisfactory, and that it was not giving good results. They were therefore not prepared to depart from it, until it was clear that there was a strong volume of considered opinion both inside and outside the Council, that a change was necessary.

The motion was rejected by 51 votes to 37.

A token cut was moved in the provision for the "Finance Department," in order to call attention to the inadequacy of the funds allotted to the nation-building departments.

The Financial Secretary refuted this and said that of the funds available for new schemes, the transferred departments had the lion's share.

The motion was rejected by 52 votes to 35.

On the 16TH MARCH Mr. Mobarak Ali moved a token cut in the demand for "Justice," to urge the appointment of a Moslem High Court Judge.

The Government, replying, said that the matter was already engaging its attention. The mover thereupon wished to withdraw the motion, but the other members challenged a division, and the motion was rejected by 49 votes to 12.

On the 19TH MARCH in moving a token cut on the vote for the administration of justice, Mr. Baldeva Sahay (Swarajist) urged Government to make a beginning in carrying out the proposal for the separation of judicial and executive functions. The cut motion was ultimately rejected.

The Council then voted the demands under the administration of justice and under jails and convict settlements without opposition.

There was a crop of cut motions in the police demand, but only three were discussed on this day. The Swarajist members proposed the omission of the provision of Rs. 16,106 in the police budget for the grant of free passages to and from the United Kingdom to sergeants and sergeants major of European domicile. The Opposition stated that they objected to this expenditure from the point of view of economy and their national sentiment.

The motion for the omission of this expenditure was rejected by 45 votes to 34.

A long discussion was raised on the motion that the item of Rs. 11,102 for the reclamation of the Magahiya "doms" (a criminal tribe) be omitted. The non-official members drew attention to the alleged conversion of the 'doms' to Christianity by the Salvation Army and objected to granting money on this ground. They also suggested that facilities should be afforded to Hindu and Moslem 'doms' in the matter of their religious observances. The Council refused to grant the money by 39 votes to 34.

Another lump sum reduction in the police demand was under discussion when the Council adjourned.

On the 21ST MARCH objection was taken to the supplementary demand of Rs. 1,61,900 for allowances to Law Officers, the amount including money wanted for Crown Lawyers in the Deoghar conspiracy case.

Mr. Krishnaballav, opposing the demand, said that there was no justification for the engagement of Mr. Manuk to conduct the prosecution on Rs. 1,500 per day when Sir Sultan Ahmad, Government Advocate, was available and should have been bound under the rules to work for a smaller fee. Objection was also taken to the trial taking place in a non-regulation town like Deoghar. If the trial had been held at Patna Mr. Manuk himself would have worked at a smaller fee. The demand was passed by 44 votes against 40.

The supplementary demands in respect of "Stamps", "Irrigation", "General Administration" and "Jails" were also passed. The Council then adjourned till next day to discuss the remaining supplementary demands after which it was prorogued.

## The Ranchi Session.

The Ranchi session of the B. & O. Legislative Council commenced at Ranchi on the 16TH AUGUST 1928. As many as six non-official bills were introduced, important among them being the Landlords' Bill to amend the Bengal Tenancy Act and to make it operative in the provinces and two bills by Moslem members providing for separate electorates in local bodies and a system of alternate election of Moslem Chairman and Vice-Chairman, the Bill for proper control of Hindu Religious Endowments in Bihar and Orissa and a bill for the better administration and protection of Moslem Wakf estates.

The Council passed the Bihar and Orissa Public Demands Recovery Amendment Bill,

### Tenancy Legislation.

Both Tenants and Landlords bills regarding the amendment of tenancy legislation, were referred to the same Select Committee.

Mr. Sifton, explaining the Government attitude, observed that the Government supported the reference of the Bill to the Select Committee in deference to the wish of the Council to consider both the Tenants and Landlords bills in the Select Committee and hoped that the parties would arrive at a satisfactory settlement. In doing so, the Government in no way committed itself to the provisions of the bill.

On the 17TH AUGUST the Orissa Tenancy Bill, designed to facilitate consolidation of agricultural holdings was referred to a Select Committee. Two Bills by Moslem Swarajists, providing separate electorates in municipalities and District Boards on fixed sliding scale basis of representation and system of alternate election of Moslem Chairman and Vice-Chairman, and the Bill for the better administration and protection of Moslem Wakf Estates were allowed to be circulated for eliciting public opinion.

Mr. Krishna Ballav Sahay (Swarajist) moved reference of the Chota Nagpur Tenure Holders Rent Account Bill to a Select Committee. He considered the measure as essential in view of the helpless position of honest co-sharers. The Revenue Secy. opposing the reference on behalf of the Government pointed out that the measure was unworkable. He considered the Bill as unfair to the landlords and the grievances of the tenure holders were not such as to justify the shouldering of the burden of expenditure which will be involved by giving effect to the provisions of the Bill. By 43 votes to 30 the Bill was referred to a Select Committee.

Mr. Baldeva Sahay (Swarajist) moved reference of the Patna University (Amendment) Bill to a Select Committee. The object of the Bill was to achieve what the Act itself provided for, namely, the establishment of a teaching University at Patna. The idea of this University reform was supported by a large body of public men and various other parts of the country had taken steps to establish universities of this type. He explained that his Bill chiefly intended to transfer control from the Government to the University in the matter of all appointments of professors and teachers in the internal colleges.

The Education Minister, moving an amendment that the Bill be circulated for eliciting public opinion, observed that he had not yet changed his opinion regarding the usefulness of a teaching and residential university but he had become doubtful how far a University with both internal and external sides could be satisfactory. He quoted the opinion of the Vice-Chancellor of Allahabad University and the report of the Bombay Committee on University Reform to show that the progress of a University was hampered by the inevitable jealousy between the external and internal sides. Another objection was that the internal colleges were likely to be better equipped and staffed than the external colleges.

The Council allowed the Bill to be circulated for eliciting public opinion.

The Hindu Religious Endowment Bill was also allowed to be circulated for eliciting public opinion. The Council then adjourned.

### Election to Simon Committee.

On the 20TH AUGUST Government resolution for co-operation with Simon Commission was discussed. There was a crowded house and packed up galleries. The Hon'ble Mr. V. J. Patel, President of the Legislative Assembly, was present seated in the distinguished visitors' gallery. About a dozen speeches were made for and against the resolution.

Moving his resolution, Mr Sifton said that the composition of the Statutory Commission was an accomplished fact and a negative attitude would bring no advantage. Bengal, Assam, Bombay and the Panjab had already appointed committees. If Bihar refused to appoint one, it would be denying itself the opportunity of remodelling its constitution on advanced lines. If it withheld co-operation, the Commission would go back with an erroneous impression of the different interests in the Province.

Moulvi Mahomed Hussein, supporting, said that the motion had an important bearing on minority communities. Even the Nehru Committee report was a step towards co-operation. Dyarchy had failed and it was up to them to show what improvements could suitably be made upon the present reforms.

Rai Bahadur Harendranath Mookerjee welcomed the resolution as it afforded an opportunity to Labour in India to press its views before the Commission which included two Labour members.

Rai Bahadur Daleep Narain Singh, supporting, said that three or four Indians on the Commission could not have done as much as so many elected representatives of the provincial Councils.

Dewan Bahadur Mahapatra asked his Oriya brothers not to be led away by party politics and urged them to place their case before the Commission.

Mr. Srikrishna Singh, Swarajist leader, opposing, criticised the speech of Lord Birkenhead in the Lords and impeached the Government for its shortcomings in education and other directions. The interests of India and England, he asserted, were not identical and they wanted the constitution for India to be made by Indians themselves.

Mr. Lingraj Misra, Swarajist from Orissa, opposing, said that the Montagu-Chelmsford Report recognised that the aspirations of Orissa were just, but after the lapse of a decade nothing had been done.

Claiming to speak on behalf of the Christians and Depressed Classes, the Rev. Brijnandan favoured co-operation and supported the motion.

The debate was adjourned to the next day, the 21ST AUGUST when the Council by 50 votes to 44 decided to appoint a committee to co-operate with the Commission. Swarajist amendment demanding a Round Table Conference was rejected.

In the discussion on the motion a dozen speakers representing various communities participated. Swarajist speakers claimed the right of self-determination and demanded the right conceded by the British Parliament to Canada, South Africa and Ireland to determine their own constitution. Moslem members stated that they had lost faith in Round Table Conferences to solve Hindu-Moslem problems and the rights of minorities. The only logical course left to them was to go before the Simon Commission and place their demands. Representatives of Christians, Anglo-Indians and Depressed Classes also affirmed faith in co-operation with the Commission.

The Council having decided to co-operate with the Commission, a committee of seven members was constituted on the 23RD AUGUST. The following were elected :—

Messrs. Mubarak Ali, Chandreshvar Prasad Narayan Singh, Athar Hussain, Raja Bahadur Harihar Prasad Narayan Singh, Raja Rajendra Narayan Bhanja Das, Rai Bahadur Sarat Chandra Ray, and Lakshmidar Mahanti.

Swarajists did not participate in the election of the committee.

The Council next voted for a supplementary demand of Rs. 50,000 for the construction of a permanent Government House at Ranchi. The present house was built to serve a temporary purpose. The total cost of the proposed house is estimated to be Rs. 4 and a half lakhs. The token demand was approved to enable work to be undertaken during the current financial year.

A supplementary demand for Rs. 20,000 for the conversion of the Radium Institute into new Council Chamber and members' quarters was refused.

On the 24TH AUGUST the Council discussed non-official resolutions purely of local interest.

The resolution discussed at some length was regarding the appointment of a committee to enquire into the grievances and conditions of persons confined under the Criminal Tribes Act in Chauterwa Settlement. Non-official members made allegations that the Salvation Army managing the settlement were Christianising inmates of the settlement both Hindu and Moslem denominations and not giving them facilities as regards their religious observances and practices. The Government repudiated allegations pointing out that they had investigated the allegations and found them to be untrue. However the Government agreed to let two Council Members visit the Settlement with the Subdivisional Officer and see things for themselves. In view of this offer the resolution was withdrawn.

The Council next adopted two resolutions regarding extension of Village Administration Act and prohibiting sale of intoxicants during religious fairs and festivals.

On the 25TH AUGUST the resolution demanding the extension of the Chota

Nagpur Encumbered Estates Act to Bihar proper was adopted by the Council by 35 votes against 4. Government members kept neutral.

The landlord members urged the need of legislation in Bihar to protect the ancient estates from ruin due to the extravagance of the proprietors. Government pointed out that the matter was a domestic concern of the landlords and Government were not prepared to step in before knowing full well what the feeling of the landlords on the question was. Any hasty action on the part of Government might be construed as an attempt at interference with the management of private estates. Government, therefore, left the matter to be decided by non-official members.

The Council also discussed certain other resolutions of local importance.

On the 27TH AUGUST the members of the Council from North Bihar moved an adjournment of the House to discuss the flood situation in North Bihar. The Hon. Mr. J. D. Sifton, Government Member, made an important statement explaining the present position regarding the floods and acquainting the Council with the facts at present known to Government. He stated that rainfall in North Bihar had been much in excess of the normal during the first part of the monsoon and Muzaffarpur district had received two inches more than the total normal rainfall for the year. The rivers consequently had been full early in July. The two main floods in the district were in July and August. The total area in Muzaffarpur district affected by these floods was about 500 square miles in Sadar Sub-Division and 518 square miles in Sitamarhi sub-division. Hajipur sub-division was not affected. Although the first floods was a record one, Bagmati river causing considerable damage to the Bhadoi Crop, its effects were not necessarily grave, there being sufficient time for fresh transplantation of the rice crop. The second flood had been more serious because it had fallen more slowly. It was now estimated that in the affected areas in Sitamarhi and Sadar sub-division about 75 per cent. of the Bhadoi crop had been lost and about 50 per cent. of the Aghani crop had been seriously affected. There had been no loss of life or cattle and damage to house property was small. The floods were reported to be subsiding on August 17. But there was still a large area near Muzaffarpur under water. Gratuitous or charitable relief had not been found necessary, few villages being so hard hit as to need it. In the Darbhanga district there was considerable flooding in Madhubani and other thanas. The position in Madhubani need not cause anxiety. Bahera thana was the most severely affected area. Twenty villages were reported to be completely under water. The most severely affected area in Samastipur sub-division was Rosra thana. A number of villages had been badly flooded owing to the bunds giving way. There had been no loss of cattle or human life except two cases of accidental drowning, 2,440 persons were relieved in the worst thanas of Jhanjharpur and Bahera. Gratuitous relief was being given in all these areas. The co-operative banks were advancing loans to the extent of Rs. 23,000. Government had placed Rs. 20,000 at the disposal of the Commissioner for loans. The District Officer of Darbhanga has asked for half a lakh for paddy loans. Government would allot this amount immediately. Detailed enquiries were being made and the whole position could be reconsidered when these were completed.

After the Government's reply the adjournment motion was withdrawn. The business of the session having been concluded, the Council was prorogued.

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# The Bengal Legislative Council.

## Formation of Simon Committee.

The Bengal Legislative Council met in Calcutta on the 9TH JULY 1928, after a long prorogation, to decide about co-operation with the Simon Commission. It was not a great debate. The old arguments were put out again, sometimes with fire, but generally without. Beyond launching the resolution Government took no part in the proceedings.

The Swarajist amendment for postponing the appointment of the Committee was negatived, 45 voting for and 82 against.

Further discussion was postponed till next day, the 10TH JULY, when the original resolution was carried by 72 votes against 50.

During the discussion that followed Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta, leader of the Swaraj Party, observed that Sir John Simon, after arriving in India, had made an offer to the non-official members to form committees of the Legislatures to assist the Commission. Mr. Sen Gupta protested against the procedure adopted by the Bengal Government to accept that offer of Sir John Simon. Official members, it was stated, would have nothing to do with the appointment of the committee, but they found the senior member of the Executive Council moving the resolution appointing the committee and other official members voting on it. The resolution was sponsored in the Legislative Council by the Vice-President of the Executive Council, and in the Government House by H. E. the Governor. The non-official members were sent for by the Governor, the head of the Executive Council, and votes were canvassed for the resolution in the Council. The Executive Head of the Government took the trouble of cabling to England, and he got replies from Sir John Simon and those replies were shown to the non-official members who had been sent for by the Governor.

The President: What is your authority for making that statement?

Mr. Sen Gupta: My authority is from an unimpeachable source.

The President: If you cannot show your credentials in my chamber for making those remarks, I will ask the Secretary to expunge your remarks on the head of the Government from the Council proceedings.

Mr. S. C. Bose: Under what authority can the President summon a member to his private chamber to prove his facts?

Mr. Sen Gupta: I shall not go to your Chamber, and I refuse to show my authority for making those remarks.

The President: Then those remarks will be expunged.

Repeating those remarks, Mr. Sen Gupta said that Sir Abdur Rahim and the Maharaja of Mymensingh had canvassed for the resolution. (Loud shouts of "shame" from Swarajist benches.)

The Maharaja of Mymensingh rose to a point of personal explanation. He said that it was not true that the Governor asked him to canvass support for the motion.

It was finally arranged that for the discussion of all amendments relating to the composition, scope and function of the Committee there should be another ordinary meeting of the Council.

On the 11TH JULY Mr. B. K. Chatterjee moved his adjournment motion to discuss the serious situation that had arisen out of the inadequacy of the steps taken by the Government for the relief of some of the famine-stricken districts of Bengal. He felt deep resentment and disappointment at the Government's attitude. In Bankura about 50,000 people were affected but the Government had spent only Rs. 12,000 on relief work.

In Khulna, the District Magistrate had admitted, said another speaker, that 90,000 people were affected out of which 1,000 were on the verge of starvation and Government had granted only Rs. 4,000.

Mr. J. C. Chakrabarti, referring to the distress at Balurghat, in the Dinajpur District, said that 15,000 people were affected and the Government had sanctioned Rs. 2,67,000 for agricultural loans. The report of the Congress Inquiry Committee showed that there had been 28 deaths from starvation in 18 villages and he shuddered to think of the heavy number of deaths in the 2,165 villages that had been affected in the Balurghat sub-division.

Sir Naliniranjan Chatterjee was replying on behalf of the Government when the closure was put and the motion that the business before the House be adjourned was carried.

As this was regarded as a censure measure, the Swarajists cried "resign."

Nawab Nawab Ali Choudhuri moved that the committee to assist the Simon Commission should consist of seven members elected by the House by a single transferable vote. The election of members to the Committee will take place on August 3. The Council was then adjourned till 31st July.

On the 31ST JULY, addressing the Council, His Excellency Sir Stanley Jackson referred to the detention of political prisoners, and said:—A year ago, I made a statement with reference to the detenus under restraint under the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act and Regulation III. I was then able to announce considerable progress in the number of men released and I expressed the hope that the rate of gradual release would continue. This gradual release has continued, and is continuing to-day. Provided nothing unforeseen occurs, at the present rate of release now operating, the number of sixteen now in detention should be gradually reduced, if not completely wiped out, in the course of a few weeks.

His Excellency added:—If I were asked what I consider after 16 months' experience and observation in the province, as the most pressing and urgent needs of Bengal, and what reforms might be calculated to bring the greatest good to the greatest number of its inhabitants. I should be inclined to express the view that they are a full and efficient system of primary education, encouragement to the cultivators of the soil, and the amelioration of their condition, and irrigation. It appears to me that the opportunity of making a start upon two of these problems is now before the Council. Serious consideration of the third subject, in my judgment, cannot be long delayed."

Referring to famine conditions in Bengal, His Excellency observed that from all accounts which could be relied upon, the Government were satisfied that the officers in the districts had carried out their difficult duties well, and had properly appreciated the situation in each district. The Government had complied with all the demands made by local officers.

His Excellency also referred to the Bengal Tenancy Amendment Bill aiming at granting substantial rights to the ryot and also to the Bengal Rural Primary Education Bill.

#### Resolution on Constitutional Advance.

The Council next took up Sir A. Rahim's motion which ran as follows:—

"That in order to secure a satisfactory and lasting solution of the political and constitutional problems that have arisen it is the opinion of this Council that

"(a) the status of India should be that of a self-governing Dominion under the British Crown as an equal partner in the Commonwealth of Nations within the British Empire and that necessary steps be taken to give adequate expression and effect to such status in the relations of India with Great Britain, the other self-governing Dominions in the British Empire and with foreign countries;

"(b) that the constitution of India be on the basis of a Federation of autonomous States, the Central Government administering the subjects concerning the whole of India;

"(c) that Dyarchy be abolished and full responsible Government be inaugurated in the Provinces;

"(d) that in lieu of the Meston award a fresh financial settlement be made;

"(e) that the citizens' rights be protected;

"(f) that appropriate provisions be made for the proper and adequate representation of important sections in the legislatures and other statutory self-governing bodies;

"(g) that in the recruitment of the public services due regard be paid to the need for securing confidence in the administration by averting communal or class monopoly".

Sir Abdur Rahim in his speech observed that the proposition laid down in the motion had nothing to do with their ultimate goal. It embodied the immediate objectives which the country had in view as regards its future. His anxiety was that the Council should express its opinion as to the form of Government India and Bengal in particular should have. There were certain propositions in his scheme, the validity of which could not be denied, and these were the main issues before the country. There was no dispute as regards Responsible Government or Dominion Status. At the present moment, they were concerned with certain general principles. If they agreed to it they would consider the different schemes. It was not possible for the House to consider the details which should be left to small committees. The theory that Parliament was responsible for every form of internal administration in India was a mere theory, and could not be carried out in practice. It was not true that the British interests were not safe in the Dominions. Every Dominion depended on Britain for defence and the position of India was far more favourable that way. It had been felt for a long time that it was not possible for the duties of internal government in India to be discharged from Whitehall. Provincial autonomy meant devolution of subjects which were not all-India ones. There was nothing revolutionary in it. There was no danger if it was made responsible to the Legislature. They could not go along the line chalked out in the Government of India Act. The Hon. Nawab Nawab Ali Chowdhuri explained the attitude of Government. This he said was a matter in which they would not take part either in discussion or in voting.

#### Discussion on Amendments.

Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq moved an amendment urging introduction of separate communal electorates. This subject was discussed for the rest of the day. The Hindu members opposed, and Mahomedans, with a solitary exception, supported separate electorates and each party blamed the other for creating the present situation in the country.

Sir Abdur Rahim, who had tried to avoid controversial matters, admitted that overwhelming Mahomedan opinion was in favour of separate electorates. There was nothing in separate electorates which would go against proper national development. Separate electorates came into existence since the Reforms, but in the second Council, when the late Mr. C. R. Das was leading the Swarajists, more than half the number of members were Mahomedans, all returned by separate electorates. Sir Abdur Rahim's experience showed that separate electorates never prevented Mahomedans from joining hands with the members of other communities on national questions. The House then adjourned.

On the 1ST AUGUST, in the course of the discussion on the main resolution Mr. Wordsworth, explaining why Europeans abstained from taking part, said that mere counting of heads in the Council would not solve the problem. They should place their views before the Commission and the resolution would serve no useful purpose.

Mr. Sen Gupta, Leader of the Opposition, in a lengthy speech, said that the explanation for the silence of Mr. Wordsworth's Party on the resolution was unnecessary, as Europeans had always voted with the officials. Had it not been so, the decision of the Council would have been against the appointment of a committee to co-operate with the Commission. The method of counting of heads held good in Mr. Wordsworth's country. That method was not good only when Indians wanted to determine their constitution.

Explaining the attitude of the Swaraj Party on the resolution, Mr. Sen Gupta said that the Congress was imbued with the ideal of independence. They had come to an understanding with all the parties for the purposes of the present settlement, and the Congress Party had agreed to support the resolution.

Sir Abdur Rahim, in reply, regretted the turn the debate had taken. If they had no responsible Government what could they do with the separate



electorates? Europeans had abstained from placing their point of view on the resolution. They had engaged a lawyer to prepare their case. They could have enough lawyers in the council to help them. The attitude of the Government was preposterous. By their attitude on the resolution they had proved that they were not fit to govern. If they had already placed facts before the Commission why should they be afraid of placing them before the Council?

Mr. Fazlul Huq's amendment was lost. Sir Abdur Rahim's resolution was then put and passed without division.

#### Government Defeated on Police Demand.

On the 2ND AUGUST Government were defeated by the Swarajists and the Mahomedans on a demand for the "Police." The Hon. Mr. Prentice, Home Member, moved that Rs. 5,37,000 be granted as expenditure under "Police" to meet the extra cost of the revision of the pay of certain subordinate ranks of the police force during the current year. He said that this demand was to increase the pay of the constables and European Serjeants. Owing to the small pay of constables there was difficulty experienced in recruiting them and also in obtaining the proper kind of men. So wastage under the present system was enormous. Bengalees and Mahomedans did not wish to come into the police service because of the low pay.

The Swarajists moved an amendment to reduce the demand by Rs. 5,00,000. They urged that in spite of the recommendation of the Police Retrenchment Committee to reduce the police expenditure by Rs. 26,50,000 Government were asking for more money. The time for the grant was inopportune as famine was raging in the province. Lastly there was not a single Bengalee as a constable in the police service. In spite of the Government opposition, the amendment was carried by a majority of 16 votes and the original demand as amended was also thrown out, Government being defeated by nine votes.

With a token cut of one rupee the Council granted Rs. 1,00,000 for famine relief and insurance.

#### Election to Simon Committee.

On the 3RD AUGUST much interest was shown by the non-official European, Mahomedan and non-Swarajist elected and nominated members in the election of seven members to the Committee appointed by the Bengal Council to assist the Simon Commission. There were 29 candidates. The following members were elected :—

Mr. W. L. Travers, the Maharaja of Nashipur, the Maharaja of Mymensingh, Sir A. K. Ghaznavi, Khan Bahadur K. M. Farooki, Mr. A. K. Fazlul Haq and Moulvi Abul Kasim

The Council discussed the rest of the day the Bengal Medical Amendment Bill, which came up for the second reading. The object of the Bill was to make the Bengal Medical Registration Council more representative. The Bill as it came out of the Select Committee suggested a nominated president and six nominated members to the Medical Council.

Discussion centred mainly on those two points. Non official members urged that the president should be elected and the number of nominated members should be reduced to three. The amendments were moved by the Swarajists and opposed by the Government.

Surgeon-General Coppenger said that Government was responsible for medical education in India and it was only fair that it should have a reasonable power of nomination. The president of the council was to be nominated by the Government and it was to be assumed that the Surgeon-General would always be nominated. The first amendment that the president be elected was put to the vote. There was a tie and with the casting vote of the president the amendment was negatived. The next amendment urging the reduction of nominated members from six to three was carried, Government being defeated by two votes. The Bill as then settled was passed. The House then adjourned.

*(Proceedings of the Bengal Tenancy Bill will be given in Vol. I, 1929.)*

INDIA ABROAD.

July-December 1928.

# INDIA IN THE League Against Imperialism.

The first Conference of the British section of the League against Imperialism and for National Independence was held in Elmslie Hall, London on the 7th July 1928. Mr. Alex. Gossip (N. A. F. T. A.) presided and there were present on the platform A. J. Cook (General Secretary, Miner's Federation), Fenner Brockway (Political Secretary, Independent Labour Party), S. Saklatvala, S. Srinivasa Iyengar (representing the Indian National Congress), Fung Saw (London Kuomintang), Mrs. Despard of the Sinn Féin and Suffragist movements), Rev. Conrad Noel, Harry Pollitt (General Secretary, Minority Movement), Mr. Mahomed Ali and R. Bridgeman. Delegates were sent from about 100 Trade Union branches from all over London. A letter was read from Mr. James Maxton, the Chairman of the International and of the British section of the League, expressing his regret at his inability to be present owing to a simultaneous engagement in Glasgow. The first resolution on the Agenda was as follows:—

## 1. Struggle Against Imperialism.

"This Conference declares that World Imperialism is a constant menace to World Peace, and that the increasing control of the Capitalist State by the trusts and monopolies whose interests are served by Imperialist policy seriously hampers the industrial and political freedom of the workers in the advanced as well as in the oppressed countries.

"This Conference, therefore, declares that a struggle against World Imperialism, in preparation for which the workers of the exploiting countries ally themselves with the workers and peasants of the oppressed peoples, must be carried to a successful issue before World Peace can be secured."

Mr. A. J. COOK, moving it, said that the best interests of the British workers could be protected most successfully by a fight against the exploitation of the foreign and colonial workers. How else could they defend the British miners when the coal-owners were forcing down the standard of living of the miners abroad? "Capital knows no country, and recognises no barriers," said Mr. Cook, amidst thundering applause. "It is the business of the workers to fight faked patriotism—class against class—without the barriers of race and colour. Protect ourselves by protecting those in other countries"

The situation in this country was getting worse and worse every day. The miners were the victims of mutual assassination. The argument of reducing wages and increasing hours to meet foreign competition was used in all coal-producing countries. Production of coal in China was steadily increasing. Conditions were so bad there that it was impossible for the British miners to compete successfully against China. In other industries, the same firms operating both in England and abroad, forced down the level of conditions everywhere. Britain, America and Japan were now engaged in the attempt to gain dominance of rich China. British Labour Party did not assist Chinese workers to obtain better conditions, but assisted the Baldwin Government to oppress them. India was worse than China, since it was our own responsibility entirely. To those who want Labour in power—what was the difference on these questions from Baldwin?

Mr. Cook then referred to the position of Mr. Vernon Hartshorn. Mr. Hartshorn was crucifying not only the British miners but also the Indian workers. He wanted the audience to understand that Mr. Hartshorn was not on the Simon Commission by the wish of the Miners' Federation. Mr. Hartshorn was receiving money from the miners, said Mr. Cook, yet the consent of the Miners' Federation was neither asked for nor given. Mr. Cook then declared that the Miners would take proper steps to deal properly with Mr. Hartshorn in due course. Mr. Cook then dwelt on the absence of Mr. Lansbury from the platform,

He said that personal friendships should not stand in the way of his making comments on Mr. Lansbury who ought to have been with them that afternoon, but who instead of being there was engaged in the task of insulting the Indian comrades. (The reference was to Mr. Lansbury's remarks of "brotherly co-operation" on the subject of the withdrawal of the Indian Labour Delegation).

Harry POLLITT who followed Mr. Cook delivered the most uncompromising speech from an anti-capitalist point of view. The problem of the capitalists was the disposal of the increased produce. The rival capitalist countries were fighting for foreign markets. The result on the Dominions was seen in the forcing down of standards of living in order to exploit the workers most fully. This must lead to war. Peace was talked about with war at the throats of the subject peoples. "We will have Peace—provided we can make War" said that capitalist countries regarding Mr. Kellogg's proposals. We must drop the labour attitude of sympathy—we must have union with the working class in India for a united advance—International trade unity in a single International. India must not allow Indian troops to conquer China, as India was conquered. There was no final solution unless we prepared to overthrow the capitalist Government.

## 2. India and the Commission.

An emergency resolution on India and the Simon Commission was the next item on the Agenda. It ran as follows:—

"This Conference of working class organisations in London declares its complete opposition to the imperialist policy of the Baldwin Government towards India. It voices its full solidarity with the Indian people in their rejection of the force of the Simon Commission, which it recognises as an attempt of British Imperialism to fasten the shackles of exploitation still more firmly on India, and it condemns the participation in the Commission by the Labour Party, which thereby makes common cause with the imperialists.

"This Conference pledges its support for the struggles of the Indian people against imperialist oppression expressed in the Indian demand for complete national independence and for the election of a representative constituent Assembly to decide the political future of India."

The resolution was moved by Mr. S. S. Iyengar, who said that it gave him really great pleasure to be present at that meeting. Mr. Iyengar said that this was the only ray of light which he had seen since his arrival in England. He said it was under his Chairmanship in Gauhati that the Indian National Congress was affiliated to the League against Imperialism. It was the only body that was upholding an idealism, and he was sure it was bound to succeed. Politics in England, said Mr. Iyengar, was somewhat polygamous. He was rather puzzled at the multifarious allegiance which politicians in England were accustomed to. There was the same man, a member of the I. L. P., also a member of the Labour Party, Liberal in certain tendencies and co-operating with the Tories. Great causes could never be won by such divided allegiance. He hoped that the League would stick to its idealism and be a great factor in international politics.

Mr. S. Saklatvala, seconding the resolution, said, the one historic fact about British imperialism is that for the last hundred years while not a single Englishman, woman or child, has been molested or far less killed on British soil by any foreign soldier, England has sent troops and killed subjects of every nationality in Europe, Asia and Africa. He gave detailed instances and used the word "murder" with indignant emphasis. Mr. Saklatvala said, the acid test of every Labour M. P. professing to hold Socialist views and subscribing to definite anti-imperialistic ideas was his willingness to join this League. He would urge every delegate in the London area to go and ask his Labour M. P. whether or not he would join this League, and if not, why not. He then referred to the Labour Party's opposition of this League and suggested that one by one many of the left wing Labour M. P.'s had dropped out of the League.

## Meeting of the Executive of the League.

The following resolutions relating to India and China were adopted at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the League against imperialism held in Berlin in August 1925.

### Resolution on India.

"The Executive Committee of the League Against Imperialism reaffirms its determination to support the policy of complete national independence for India.

"It condemns the resolution on the colonial question recently adopted by the 3rd Congress of the Labour and Socialist International at Brussels which divides the subject races into three and while stipulating complete independence for China, Iraq, Syria and Egypt, denies a similar right to India, despite the fact that the Indian people through the National Congress has definitely demanded complete national independence.

"The Executive Committee of the League Against Imperialism holds that the progress and development of the workers and peasants of India is impossible under foreign domination and further that British control of India is an insuperable obstacle to general disarmament and a standing menace to world peace, while the economic exploitation of the Indian workers is the root-cause of unemployment and of the lowering of standards in Great Britain and other capitalistic countries.

"It therefore draws the attention of Indian political leaders to the fact that unless they are prepared to betray the freedom of the people of India and to undermine the foundation of world socialism, a compromise with British Imperialism is not only a gross betrayal of the rights of the people of India to freedom but also perpetuates a principal cause of international war and destroys the hopes of world peace."

### Resolution on China.

"The Executive Committee of the League Against Imperialism at its meeting in Berlin in August 1928 declares that the Resolution adopted at its meeting in Cologne in August 1927 and at the meeting of the General Council of the League in December 1927 in Brussels in which the Kuomintang was represented to be the tools of the Imperialists, as the betrayer of the Chinese Revolution, as the murderers of Workers and Peasants, were perfectly correct. The Kuomintang has advanced further along the path of betrayal. The Commanders of the troops of occupation and the administrative officials of the English robbers are officially recognised as the closest friends of the Kuomintang. The War of the Japanese against the population of Tsinan which was taking part in the struggle for freedom, and the occupation of Shantung are welcome measures to the Kuomintang by means of which it gains the right of coming forward in North China as the political compradore of the Imperialists. On account of the increasing differences between the Imperialist Powers and the rivalry of the Kuomintang generals towards each other the imperialist war danger in the Pacific Ocean with a view to a partition of China has greatly increased. During the past 18 months 310,000 persons have been the victims of the Kuomintang terror and of the Imperialists carried on against the Workers and Peasants.

"There is still another development which must be noted with reference to the Chinese question. The Second International not only veils the murder by the Kuomintang of the Workers and Peasants, but it conferred with the leaders of the Kuomintang at its world Congress in Brussels.

"The opponents of the Chinese emancipation movement therefore to-day constitute a trinity consisting of the Imperialists, the Kuomintang and the Second International.

"The present situation in China is characterised by the rule of the Feudalists in the Hoang-ho district and in the province of Chekiang and by the rule of the commercial bourgeoisie in the Yangtze valley. The position of the working masses of China is more intolerable than it ever was before. Boycotts, strikes and risings in the country and in the towns follow one after the other.

"The sacred duties of the League Against Imperialism in the struggle against the imperialists and for the support of the Chinese Revolution are as follows:—

"(1) To strengthen the struggle against the imperialist policy of intervention in China, and especially to demand the immediate withdrawal of the troops of occupation and of the warships from China.

"(2) To expose the policy of the Second International as being a help to the Imperialists and the counter-revolutionary Kuomintang, for the purpose of creating an united front of the international proletariat for the support of the Chinese Revolution.

"(3) To strengthen the struggle against the terrible storm of Terror in China, and to collect for the fighting-fund for the Chinese Workers and Peasants.

"(4) To prevent loans and the delivery of arms to the counter-revolutionary Kuomintang generals.

INDIA IN THE

# World Youth Peace Congress.

The World Youth Peace Congress opened at Erede, Ommem, Holland on the 19th August 1928 in presence of a vast, distinguished gathering. Delegates to the Congress hailed from nearly all the important countries of the World. There were in all over 500 delegates and between them as many as twenty-six nations of the world were represented. The Indian youth was also represented in full strength. Bengal was represented through the delegates sent by the All-Bengal Youngmen's Association. The Bengal delegates were Messrs, Nalinakshya Sanyal, Guha Roy and Sen Gupta. Andhra Desh was represented by Mr. Rao who had come on behalf of the Andhra Youth League. Nor was Gujerat the home province of Mahatma Gandhi unrepresented. Messrs, Mehta, Thoria and Miss Hathi Singh represented Mahatmajee's Province. Mr. Siddique represented the Hyderabad youth while the Young Theosophists' League of India was represented by Mr. Sinha. The oriental point of view made itself effectively heard in the Congress. The Indian delegates took an active part in the proceedings and their valuable contribution to the labours of the Congress were duly recognised and honoured by the Congress which elected Mr. Sanyal as the Secretary of the socio-economic section and Mr. Rao as Vice-Chairman of the section on religion. At the commencement of the proceedings it was brought to the notice of the Congress that the Dutch and German Governments had prevented the attendance at the Congress of the Zussion delegate of communists by refusing visas for passports for entry into their respective territories and on the other hand the Soviet Russia was accused of refusing passports to the Pacifist delegates from the Soviet Territory.

As the very name of the Congress indicated, the main objective of the Congress was to enlist the youth of all nationalities in the service of the world brotherhood. The Congress was based on the belief that the youth of the world had a mission to perform and that they alone were best fitted to carry the torch of universal brotherhood and of preaching the cult of limitations of territorial patriotism. Mr. Sanyal made an impressive speech demanding justice for all oppressed, and pleading for the establishment of a permanent world peace. The Congress also appreciated the message which was read out to the assembly from the youths of the Nationalist China. The following is the text of Mr. Sanyal's speech:—

## Mr. Sanyal's Speech.

Dear Brothers and Sisters :

It is not necessary to define here the meaning and the courses of economic domination, commonly known as imperialism, which, you will all admit has ever been the outstanding cause of all wars in the last few centuries.

The condition of affairs in my unfortunate country after more than a century and a half of the rule of British imperialism, will, I am sure, convince any honest person of the disastrous and dangerous effects of this form of organised plunder and scientific freebootery. You will easily realise how the permanent peace of the world is impossible without a complete removal of all forms of Imperialism.

We are a nation of 320 million people. More than half of the population, and it will not be very far from truth if I say 80 per cent of the people, hardly get two square meals a day. Nearly the same number fails to clothe themselves properly and the condition of housing cannot even be imagined by you in this part of the world. More men die in one year from one disease—"malaria"—in my province of Bengal alone, than the number sacrificed per annum in the last great war. Taking India as a whole every 5 seconds one of my countrymen is seeking eternal peace. In parts of the big cities more than 300 infants die out of every 1000 born. Only 9 per cent of the people are literate in British India while in some of the native states literacy is as large as 65 to 70 per cent. There is no political power of the people and the whole governmental machinery is callous to all sense of responsibility to the sons of the soil. And all this is not due to any inherent physical or cultural defects of the people, nor on account of the inadequacy of natural resources. The plunder of India set in motion the mills of Paisley and Manchester, and it is a matter of common knowledge that the wealth of my country attracted always the traders and exploiters from all parts of the world.

In the domains of culture India has contributed some of the finest thoughts and has a tradition which many of your western countries would be proud to possess.

In its place to-day there is nothing more left than a starving, dehumanised mass of men who have hardly a consciousness of life itself.

The condition of Youth in such a country can only be imagined. Unemployment is acute in all spheres of life. The economic circumstances have shaken the whole fabric of society and stark poverty and ignorance prevent any work of reconstruction. The few educated young men who feel it their duty to set themselves to the service of the people are at every step hindered in their work by the agents of the repressive government. If they dare to question the methods of the bureaucracy or even when they rise above the ordinary and are likely to be troublesome to the irresponsible government the whole machinery of repression is levelled against them. Young men are arrested without warrant and are detained in jail without trial and without even allowing them to know why they are imprisoned. The period of such detention has extended to upwards of three years and many have perished unknown and unwept in unknown corners of the prisons—sometimes far away from their own districts. The few that manage to survive this oppression are ever crippled physically and economically and they are forced to sacrifice their ideal of service. The same tragic tale is met with everywhere—in Egypt, in China, in Mexico, Nicaragua, Morocco, Indonesia and in all parts of Africa.

How can you expect to establish world-peace and unite the whole youth of the world so long as such conditions prevail?

An English friend questioned the veracity of my statements. Yes! They are so horrible that they seem quite incredible. I invite him to be convinced with facts quoted from Government records and from the writings of British historians. A search for truth pays and I challenge anyone to disprove me. My education that enables me to speak here has been cited as instance of the benefits of British rule. But, I believe, that, in itself, is the greatest condemnation of Imperialism. I had an average intelligence as any of you, but on account of the narrow imperial culture that has been permitted to dominate the whole sphere of life in India, I can speak but one language here. The whole of the non-English speaking western world, their achievements, history and culture, have been kept away from the Indian youth! I cannot come into more intimate contact with many of you as I would.

Will you help us in breaking the barriers and enable us to stand by your side as brothers and sisters and work with you in the achievement of that one end—the end of peace and love—which is the only foundation on which the kingdom of Heaven can be constructed on this earth.

If you choose to take up the cause of justice and righteousness in order to secure living peace—not the peace of a dead and inert physical matter—I ask you to give your most serious attention to this aspect of the question, and I know your Youth will give you the necessary strength to stand up against all odds and to declare your determination to establish equality, freedom, and lasting peace among the free and self-determining citizens of the world. The complaint is made that the outlook of oriental youth is still confined to nationalism. Will you not help them to rise above their narrowness and to realise that ideal of universal love and brotherhood which is one of the noblest heritage of the East?

For the attainment of permanent peace Imperialism must go. It has created havoc not only upon the oppressed countries, but the demoralisation that has followed upon its practice in the seemingly prosperous countries of Europe and America, is no less acute. The whole outlook on life in the west has been tainted with the false idea that the value of man depends upon his consumption. The economic measure of the standard of life of the individual has been defined to be the extent of his expenditure. The social value of the man has thus been completely ignored and the entire structure of existence has been constructed on rather shaky foundations. The real value of a man should be the true measure of his standard of life. This is his contribution to society, material and non-material, less his consumption. If we build our economic ideas on this basis we will not need to call a man like Buddha or Tolstol, a man of low standard of life. With the removal of individual exploitation the tendencies for economic domination will disappear.

Some friends have asked us to rely on the League of Nations. What is the character of the League now? It is a travesty of truth to call it a League of "Nations," when it is, as you all know, merely a League of diplomats, of pirates that are anxious to maintain their position of eminence through conspiracy and through mutual share of the booty. Has the cause of righteousness and peace been advanced by an iota by this organization of ever suspicious ministers?

Nearly 150 Conferences on disarmament will give you the answer. About the oppressions in the oriental countries, in the colonies and even on smaller European states,

our friends ought to know, that the League has no jurisdiction. The specific instances of Britain's conduct towards Egypt a few months ago, and the outrages on China, Iraq, Morocco and at Tyrol will, I trust, convince my friends of the helplessness of oppressed peoples under the rule of the League. To those that are very optimistic about the future I have only one thing to say that the heavy edifice of international justice cannot be built on this weak foundation. India is proclaimed as a member of the League in some respects. Do you know that Indian people cannot have even a word at the selection of "their" representative? The member when he sits is not free to vote on the League, and the weight of India is only misused by Great Britain against the other participants on the Commission. The Mandate policy has afforded only another opportunity for the Big Powers to oppress the weak, small nationalities, when any serious question affecting the interest of the Big Powers crops up and when these disagree, the Mandate Commission becomes powerless.

Under the cloak of the Mandate do you realise that a Middle East Empire has grown up out of the last World-war? Do you seriously believe that such an arrangement can even secure peace?

### Wanted Real Light.

We have come all the way at your invitation with the hope and expectation that you will give your fullest consideration to the matter and make it possible for East and West to meet together not with a spirit of suspicion and fear as our diplomats have often met, but with real sympathy and fraternity. We want a definite lead from you. Advise us what we should do and think seriously of the responsibilities that you may be prepared to undertake on our behalf.

Many friends of sincere convictions have placed before us numerous idealistic and realistic suggestions—Anarchists, Physiocrats, Social Democrats, Anti-Militarists, League of Nations enthusiasts, and last but not the least, the Communists. None of these programmes appeal to us as practical propositions, and some appear to be fundamentally contradictory to eastern conditions. The only programme that has some credit of experiment behind it is that of the communists. It appeals to my head but fails to inspire any response from our heart. It appears to me to ignore the natural and fundamental instincts of family and love. I am not afraid of the label, but I fail to understand how the superimposition of one class over another can lead to everlasting peace. The success of the programme in the conditions of life in our country is also very doubtful.

Although my faith in human goodness and in the power of love becomes shaken when I look upon the sufferings of our people and our honest young persons, I am still mustering courage to stick to the spirit of non-violence which has been propounded by our revered countryman, Mahatma Gandhi. Whether we shall have to forsake that faith and to seek that through communism, depends entirely on you, my friends in the imperialistic countries. We are only awaiting your reply and active response.

The power of imperialism lies in keeping the people in general in complete darkness about the real happenings in the oppressed countries. A few capitalists who alone benefit out of the exploitations and who in most of the western countries constitute the real power behind the state, misuse the powers of Government, and while they secure all the plunder the whole nation is put to disrepute. The most mischievous propaganda is carried on through the press to convey to the people and also to the youth a mutilated and garbled statement of affairs and what is the entire basis of existence of the capitalists becomes the "White Man's burden" for the masses. Cannot the Youth of the west make up their mind to combat this state of affairs by securing and giving due publicity of the absolute truth about the happenings in the oppressed oriental countries and Africa? Are you mere idealists, with no power to inspire confidence in us by your active work?

There are two more requests that I shall make. The strength of imperialists lies in militarism and in economic exploitation. What are you going to determine now and henceforward in these respects? You do not certainly expect the youth of the oppressed countries to sing hallelujah when your bayonets will stick into their breasts, when your cruisers will threaten Egypt and China to accept terms of a peace "proposal," and your aeroplanes will disturb the classic quiet of inoffensive Persia. Will it be too much to expect that you will refrain from joining in any army, navy, or air forces, specially those that may be utilised beyond the territorial jurisdictions of your respective countries? Will it not be possible for you to refuse your co-operation to your exploiting capitalists, merchants, and industrialists?

If you only confine yourselves within a more reasonable way of life these things that we specifically make a request to you for will become easy. If your country cannot feed you we invite you to the East to make it your 'home' permanently, and by your example and work to infuse new life there. Your countrymen that have been there in the past



went out simply to make money, and after securing as much as they could by means, fair or foul, came away. Their greed and hurry made them forget all sense of moral justice, their life in the East both of the man and the woman is one of the most reckless and vicious—both in social and personal affairs. When they come back after amassing some wealth they become the most reactionary and abominable members of European society under the garb of the name of gentlemen. When you will make the East your home there will be no such danger—no fear for the East, in any way.

There can be no compromise with evil and talks of Dominion Status etc. are a myth. Imperialism must be abolished in all its forms. There can be only two things in the world—domination or self-determination. India, Egypt, Africa, Nicaragua, Indonesia must have complete national independence. Self-Government in its worst form is preferable to good Government, and therefore any changes in the organization of the present bureaucratic arrangement will not give peace. The whole order of things requires change and reconstruction. Let us have our rights to bring food and clothing to our starving millions and make them realise that they are also human beings as you and I am.

I charge you with the sins of your forefathers and demand justice at the altar of Youth, with a view to secure permanent peace of the world. The way to peace can be paved with righteousness, and when we will secure it we shall sing together, Om Santi, Om Santi, Om Santi.

## INDIA IN THE THIRD CONGRESS OF THE

# Labour and Socialist International.

India was represented effectively at the sitting of the International Socialist Congress held at Brussels on the 9th August 1928 by Dewan Chamanlal and Mr. Bakhe who attended as fraternal delegates from the Indian Trade Union Congress. The question of Indian freedom figured prominently owing to the propaganda carried on by the Indian delegates to draw attention to the situation created in India by the imposition of the Simon Commission on India against Indian opinion and by participation of representatives of the British Labour Party on the Commission in direct contravention of the pledges of the Labour Party at Blackpool and other conferences.

Dewan Chamanlal had issued on the eve of the sitting of the Colonial Commission a memorandum stating the Indian point of view and strongly criticising the British Labour Party's attitude towards the Simon Commission. The proceedings of the Colonial Commission were in camera but as a result of the memorandum and the activities of the Indian delegates, there was a lengthy and heated debate over the Indian question and the British Labour Party's betrayal.

### Self-Determination.

The initiative in raising the debate on the conduct of the Labour Party was taken up by one of the leaders of the Independent Labour Party, Mr. John PATON who is the National Secretary of the Independent Labour Party. Mr. Paton moved an amendment that the Commission do report to the Congress that it recognised India's right to self-determination and that it congratulated the Indian parties on drafting a constitution and welcomed the development of the Indian Trade Union movement and promised all assistance to Indian Labour in the development of Trade unionism in the country. Mr. Paton reviewed concisely the salient features of the recent developments in British politics in regard to India and endorsed the charge levelled against the Labour Party by Dewan Chamanlal and asserted that the British Labour Party had by its conduct in authorising two of its members to sit on the Simon Commission betrayed India and denied India's right to self-determination notwithstanding the Labour Party's pledges, recognising the right of Indian peoples to frame their own constitution.

### Labour Party's Attitude.

The Labour Party's attitude was defended by Mr. Harry SNELL who spoke for the Labour Party and claimed not on the merits of the case but on the point of procedure that the issues raised by Mr. Paton's amendment were matters which affected the internal

affairs of the Party with which it was not open to the Colonial Commission to deal. Mr. Snell contended that if it was once permitted to discuss internal differences which were inevitable in the case of all movements then there would be no end to it. The British Labour movement had the right to ask that its internal affairs be not raised at this international forum where all parties were concerned only with principles and policies which were capable of international application.

There was a very interesting discussion on the point raised by Mr. Snell. Discussion showed that the house was not unanimous in its views on the preliminary question raised by Mr. Snell. Differences of views manifested themselves more or less on territorial lines. The Socialist spokesmen representing continental countries supported generally Mr. Snell's view and expressed the opinion that they could not interfere in what was evidently a difference of opinion on the attitude of British Labour towards the Simon Commission between the two wings of the Labour movement as the Labour Party and the Independent Labour Party. On the other hand French, Russian and Chinese delegates expressed the view that the House should record in unequivocal terms its conviction that India was entitled to assert its right to Independence.

At this stage Mr. George LANSBURY replied on the merits of the case as the Chairman of the Labour Party and therefore authoritative exponent of its policy towards India. Mr. George Lansbury assured the House that British Labour stood by its declarations in favour of Indian freedom and gave the pledge of full Dominion Status to India. As regards Labour participation on the Simon Commission Mr. Lansbury said that it was only one incident and no action of the Labour Party in regard to that incident could deflect the Labour Party from its policy of self-determination for all subject peoples including India. Mr. Lansbury also made it clear what the Labour view was in regard to the Indian declaration of independence. He said that the Labour Party hoped that India would remain in the British Commonwealth of Nations but at the same time fully recognised India's right to decide finally whether she would remain within the Commonwealth or not.

#### Socialists' Support for Indian Cause.

After listening to Mr. Lansbury the House decided to adopt Mr. Paton's motion with slight changes to meet the susceptibilities of the British Labour Party. As amended the Colonial Commission recognised India's right to self-determination and pledged the support of the Congress in this direction and also promised to support the Indian Trade Union movement. The statement in Mr. Paton's motion relating to drafting by Indian parties of their constitution was deleted lest it should be regarded as an indirect censure on British Labour participation in the Simon Commission and thus commit the House to an expression of opinion on a matter of internal difference of opinion.

#### Chamanlal's Exposition of British Labour.

The following letter was addressed by Dawan Chamanlal, Fraternal Delegate of the All India Trade Union Congress to the delegates of the third Congress of the Labour and Socialist International (Brussels), on the 7th August 1928 :—

I have been deputed by my organisation to present the case of the workers and peasants of British India before you. I find that, as a fraternal delegate to this session of the Labour and Socialist International, I can do so only by means of a written memorandum, since the Executive has taken the decision that no fraternal delegate shall have the right of speech.

Comrades, I am here, therefore, as a witness, a spectator. What do I find? I find that the policy of the L. S. I. with regard to India is dictated solely by the British Labour Party. The facts of the situation governing one sixth of the population of the world are presented to you by a party with imperialistic leaning, which through a memorandum of which the reputed author is Major Graham Pole, sets out details which in many respects are inaccurate and misleading, bristling with suppression of facts, full of false suggestions and clothed in language which is often borrowed from the ruling class in India, the British Imperialist Government.

To illustrate my meaning let me quote two instances. The official Government publications (as well as officials themselves on many occasions) have said, in order to justify the inhuman conduct of the Government and the employers towards the workers, that Trade Unions in India are merely strike committees, and that, therefore, they cannot deal with them. This is a falsehood which has often been exposed. I do not know of any country where a general strike affecting 1,50,000 textile workers has lasted under similar conditions for over three months as in India to-day showing the strength of the Trade Union movement. And yet the memorandum submitted by the British Labour Party says on page 54 :—

"and the Trade Unions are rather more in the nature of strike committees"—a sentence actually borrowed from a Government publication entitled "India" which is the official apologist and advocate of British Imperialism. This is purposeful. Its significance lies in this, that British Labour wishes to justify its backward and reactionary policy towards India by inducing you to believe falsely that the working classes in India are themselves backward and reactionary. As President of the last session of the All-India Trades Union Congress I can testify that no movement is better organised than ours.

Then again, in order to justify the remark in the programme submitted to you, that national freedom is principally a national concern, a deliberate suppression of truth is resorted to on page 57 where the following statement is made :—

"Many of the textile mills, coal mines, iron and steel works are in the hands of Indians and financed by Indian capital" thereby leaving you to believe that European capital is not interested in exploiting us and that the Indian problem is therefore a national and not an international one. The writer is significantly silent about the jute mills. Why? Because 74 out of 76 are in the hands of European capitalist. And the writer of the memorandum is wrong even about the only steel works in India in Indian hands. The debenture holders and financiers are in London. Most of the important mines are British owned. Hence a right against British exploitation in India must necessarily be on international right and not merely a national right. Why is this deliberately suppressed by the British Labour Party, and the suggestion thrown out prominently regarding the Indian aspect of capitalistic industrial exploitation? The British Labour Party has deliberately shut its eyes against the fact that a Thousand Million Pounds Sterling lies invested in India, and is controlled by British capitalists. The reason is that British Labour is apparently not desirous of lending a hand against imperialistic exploitation in India and wishes the fight to be merely a national one, in order to divest itself of all responsibility. Its past record amply justifies this statement. Far from lending a hand, its recent policy has been indistinguishable from the imperialistic policy of the Conservative or the Liberal Party in Great Britain.

I am not forgetful of the fact that Mr. Arthur Henderson in his presidential speech delivered before your Conference, said :

"We are aware that unhappily this natural and least costly road towards the establishment of the workers' power does not stand open in all countries. Again and again the representatives of the capitalist order endeavour to interfere by acts of violence in the course of democracy and to erect a system of despotism which forces the workers back into a status in which they are deprived of all rights".

Such humanity does him credit. But let us examine not the language of idealism but the deeds of realist politicians. Mr. Arthur Henderson is the Secretary of the British Labour Party. When his Party took office in 1924 what did it do? It, of its own initiative, promulgated a law applicable against 247 million Indians, under which any man (always of course the opponents of the British Government in India) could be arrested, deported and indefinitely imprisoned without trial, nay, without even a charge being preferred. Over 200 young Indians, some of the finest in the land, have suffered under the barbarous legislation, and some to this day are still in prison or under detention. This was an act of the British Labour Party. Comrades! you will forgive us in India if after this we consider the attitude of the British Labour Party towards Fascism, towards Bolshevism, towards democracy and freedom as somewhat hypocritical. And if the Labour and Socialist International has nothing better to offer the world than to subscribe to the policy of the British Labour Party towards India, we can come to no other conclusion than that it too is saturated with reformist notions of imperialistic tendency.

Was it not an act of violence against democracy on the part of the British Labour Party to flout the will of the Indian Parliament and of the Indian nation and rule India not only with the help of military dictatorship but with a revival of Star Chamber methods of arbitrary arrest and imprisonment and deportation? The British Labour Party committed a crime against the Indian people, against itself and against Socialism. With what conviction can that Party now condemn at your Conference "the Fascist tyranny or the Bolshevik dictatorship"? If in Italy farcical and arbitrary trials have taken place and men imprisoned, in India with the authority of the British Labour Party men have been imprisoned without trial or charge. If the Bolsheviks are alleged to have committed acts of violence, what shall we say of the summary arrests of political opponents in India, with the authority of the British Labour Party,—some of whom have died in prison or committed suicide?

I am justified in saying that the British Labour Party is utterly hypocritical in its assertions of freedom and self-determination for India. At Blackpool it passed a resolution which is mentioned in the memorandum. It runs thus :—

"The Conference declares that the Royal Commission to be appointed under the Government of India Act should be so constituted and the method of doing its work so arranged that it will enjoy the confidence and co-operation of the Indian people."

The Commission known as the Simon Commission was duly appointed. It consisted of seven English Members of Parliament sent out to India to decide whether India is fit for a further measure of advance in self-Government. The people of India protested in vain. Every political party in India declared a boycott of the Commission but the Labour Party of Great Britain remained adamant. The All-India Trades Union Congress condemned the Commission and called upon the British Labour Party to refuse its co-operation with the Commission. The Labour Party turned a deaf ear. The British Labour Party sold the pass to the Conservative Party. It agreed to place two of its members on the Commission—to act as the hangmen of the East. The Blackpool resolution said that the Commission should be constituted and its method of work so arranged that it will enjoy the confidence and co-operation of the people of India. The British Labour Party, knows that neither in its constitution nor in its method does the Commission enjoy the confidence and co-operation of the Indian people. The reason is that India demands the right to determine her own destiny. But in the face of its resolution passed at Blackpool, in the face of its lip-sympathy with the principle of self-determination for oppressed nations, the British Labour Party continues to co-operate with the Conservatives and Liberals in order to fashion stronger chains of slavery for the exploited millions of India.

The hired apologist of the British Labour Party, whose memorandum on India I have referred to gives on page 61 six reasons as to why Indians refuse to co-operate with the Simon Commission. Deliberately and with a desire to take advantage of your ignorance of the facts concerning India, he leaves out the only reason which has weighed with us—namely, the right to determine our own destiny for which we ask for a round table conference with a preliminary declaration guaranteeing our inherent right to settle our own constitution and not the privilege of having our constitution settled for us by seven men, whose voice, excepting that of the Chairman, would not be trusted or respected in their own country in matters vitally affecting Great Britain.

So nervous was the British Labour Party that at the British Commonwealth Labour Conference it moved, after notice had been given by us of a censure motion against it regarding its imperialistic policy towards India, that no resolution should be admitted; so nervous that for the first time perhaps in the history of the British connection with India, the British Labour Party refused to have a day set apart in Parliament to discuss the Indian question, although almost challenged to it by Lord Winterton, the Conservative Under-Secretary of State for India; so nervous indeed that the British Labour Party writer of the memorandum on India submitted to the Congress of the Labour and Socialist International, says in his concluding remark that though the Indian national movement is committed to independence India does not mean independence. Such deliberate mis-statements deserve your contempt, as do also such arguments as that the British withdrawal from India would hand the workers over to the Bourgeoisie. At the present moment the whole Indian Nation has been handed over with the assistance of the British Labour Party to a foreign exploitation which knows few parallels in history.

Comrades The British Labour Party has betrayed India and betrayed socialism. It is for you to decide whether you will repeat, in regard to the colonial question, the imperialistic intentions hidden under the cloak of socialistic slogans of the British Labour Party and thus condemn yourselves in the eyes of the oppressed, exploited workers of the world, or stand by them without hesitation, without reservation and without cowardice.

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## INDIA IN THE

# British Labour Party Conference.

Over 1,000 delegates attended the Annual Session of the British Labour Party Conference opened by Mr. George Lansbury on the 1ST OCTOBER 1928 at Birmingham.

Mr. George LANSBURY, in his address as Chairman, deplored the disunity prevailing among a few sections of the Party. He emphasised that, in a democratic movement, the majority must rule and declared "Socialism is inscribed on our banners". Britain, with all its resources, must be owned and used in the service of all people. He pointed out that the credit money, raised for capitalist investments in Asia and Africa, could as easily be raised to re-organise and reconstruct our own national resources. "There is little sense" he said, "in sending our best people thousands of miles away to grow food, if at the same time we leave our own splendid soil uncultivated."

Mr. Lansbury drew attention to the Government's "criminal folly" in its dealings with India, China and Russia and declared that, although the Party entirely dissented from the proposal to apply Bolshevik methods of organisation to Britain, Labour, when it regained power, would hold out its hand of friendship to the Russians. Mr. Lansbury declared that the British people were responsible for the conditions of life in which hundreds of millions in India and elsewhere now live. "Disagreements concerning the Simon Commission, unpleasant and disagreeable as they may be, must not deflect us an iota from our duty to those teeming millions. We may rejoice that all that is politically vocal in British India has declared in favour of continuing unity between Britain and India on lines which we Labourites have again and again advocated. I hope that the representatives of India, who are drawing up a constitution will frankly and as equals meet the Simon Commission and that when the Commission's work is finished, a representative body of Indians will come to Britain to take, as they will be entitled to take, a big part in the drawing up and settling of the Act of Parliament, which will enable India to take her place as a free partner and sister nation with the rest of the Dominions."

"We are apt to think that modern Empires, especially our own, are immovable and safe from destruction. It is not so. The Government's criminal folly in regard to its policy towards India, China and Russia has closed three great markets to British commerce and industry. A more honest dealing with our brothers in India in regard to industrial affairs and the development of their country will inevitably lead to increasing exchange and trade. Let there be no mistake that the day of rapacious unchecked exploitation of the past is gone. The Eastern people may not be skilled in the arts of war but they are experts in the use of the more competent weapon of boycott, and they understand the tremendous powers which 'standing still' gives. China and India possess civilisation older than our own. Into their lives has come a ferment of change and development and the Western peoples must meet the situation in an entirely new spirit."

"By assisting our Indian brothers to obtain control over the affairs of their land," concluded Mr. Lansbury, "we will not injure our own people. A higher standard of the so-called subject-races would stabilise our own conditions. The treatment of India, Asia and Africa by Labour in power would be the acid test by which history would judge us as democratic. Our vision is to prove to the world that, without a catastrophic upheaval, it is possible to transform the Imperial Empire into a Commonwealth of Free Nations."

Referring to the attitude of the Communists, Mr. Lansbury said that the members of the Communist Party were not likely, until their policy of action was changed, to rejoin the Labour ranks. The Communists had entered the field against them, both politically and industrially, because they accepted a theory of organisation and action which was foreign to that of the Labour Party.

### Resolution on India.

Mr. A Fenner BROCKWAY moved a reference back of the paragraph in the Parliamentary report, dealing with the question of appointment of the Indian Commission.

In moving his resolution, Mr. Brockway drew attention to the last year's resolution, passed by the Labour Party demanding for the Statutory Commission in support of the Indian people. The Simon Commission was opposed by an overwhelming majority of political opinion in India. It was no use to point out to decisions of Provincial Councils. The chance verdicts of many of the Provincial Councils were more due to official pressure on non-official members rather than any change in the attitude of the people towards the Commission which continued to be as hostile as ever. It would be a big delusion, said Mr. Brockway, if they thought that Indian opinion had changed.

Mr. Brockway then proceeded to deal with the action of the Viceroy at the suggestion of Sir John Simon in nominating members from the Assembly to make up the co-operation committee and characterised the act in appointing "national representatives" in spite of the verdict of the Assembly as outrageous. It was essential, he contended, that a bridge must be built between India and Britain and between the Labour of both the countries.

Concluding, Mr. Brockway said that Indian parties would never meet the Simon Commission so long as they had to accept an inferior status and so long as the procedure of the Commission remained what it was. But there were indications that they would be prepared to meet the Simon Commission at a Round Table Conference, without prejudice, to consider the whole question of the new constitution.

Mr. Alec GOSSIP, Secretary, Furnishing Trades Union, a prominent member of the Minority Movement, seconded the motion. In his speech, Mr. Gossip denounced the action of the Labour Party in accepting to participate in the inquiry as opposed to the fundamental principles of Socialism.

The motion was opposed by Mr. Ramsey MACDONALD. Some years before the appointment of the Commission, said the ex-Premier, he and his colleagues had been considering the best methods of solving the question of further constitutional reforms for India. The appointment of Indians to the Statutory Commission was not favoured either by Whitehall or by the bureaucracy. They thought that it would prove very unsatisfactory. Then

the present scheme was thought about. Both the countries had Parliaments. The Indian legislatures were not so unrepresentative as Mr. Brockway would have them imagine. The Labour Party afterwards started negotiations with Lord Birkenhead and secured modifications sufficiently satisfactory to justify the Party's support to the Simon Commission.

He very much regretted the attitude taken by the Indians in the whole matter. Indians had refused the Round Table Conference suggested by Mr. Brockway. They had refused his invitation to meet the Labour members of the Commission, when in London.

Mr. MacDonald then made an attack on the Indian Press saying that it had been grossly misrepresenting the British Labour Party's attitude. He had referred to this matter in the course of his talks with some of the Indians. He had in fact challenged them about it. All that they said in reply was that they must do this for political purposes. Many of the Indian Nationalists were unconcerned as to the bottom dog. He was sure that when India understood the work of the Commission she would agree. He concluded with an assurance that the Labour Party would do its utmost to bridge the gulf between Britain and India.

In the course of the discussion, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald claimed that the present Commission was ten times more democratic than any Royal Commission. Labour representatives on the Simon Commission would do their best to build a golden bridge for India which would make India certain of her own salvation. "There is one thing which I would like to say, and it is time that I said it, that as long as I hold any position in the Parliamentary Party, I am not going to take any instructions from any outside body, unless I agree with it."

Mr. Ernest Thurtle repudiated Mr. MacDonald's suggestion and said that popular India was dead against the Commission. He said that by participating in the Simon Commission the Labour Party had flouted its resolution passed at Blackpool. Indians were denied a voice in framing their own constitution.

Mr. Harry Snell said that an Indian minority in the Commission could not do much and maintained that Labour had betrayed India by its action. They had stood by self-Government and self-determination.

The motion to refer back was lost on a card vote by 1,50,000 against 25,90,000.

### Indian Demonstration Against Labour's Betrayal.

On the 26TH OCTOBER there was a striking demonstration against the participation of the British Labour Party in the labours of the Simon Commission, at Limehouse, London. Mr. Saklatwala, Communist M. P. was the principal speaker. Mrs. Naidu, India's poetess, was also present at the meeting but she declined to speak on the subject matter of the resolution placed before the meeting.

The resolution placed before the meeting for its adoption said that the meeting protested against the participation of the British Labour Party in the labours of the Simon Commission.

Mr. SAKLATWALA, who was the principal speaker, said that the entire scheme of holding an enquiry through an exclusively British Commission with its terms of reference was calculated to defeat the very object for which the Commission was supposed to work, namely to secure Indian

liberty. "British Workers", declared Mr. Saklatwala, "could not, if they be true to themselves, be a consenting party to this scheme. British workers", continued Mr. Saklatwala "could not allow Downing Street flatterers and place-hunters to carry on the Simon policy. Out of the very material now used to defeat the movement for Indian liberty, Mr. Saklatwala maintained, people would arise who would set themselves forward to-morrow as Fascist leaders in England itself.

An appeal was made to Mrs. NAIDU to make her contribution to the debate on that resolution. Mrs. Naidu, in course of a brief speech, definitely declined to say anything on the subject matter of the resolution. She defended her refusal by pointing out that the resolution related to the attitude of British workers and the responsibility for determining towards the Simon Commission must be entirely borne by the British people themselves. It was not at all the concern of Indians to say what attitude the British people took in regard to the Commission issue. Indian opinion, Mrs. Naidu pointed out, desires to have no association with any British Political Party, as experience has amply proved that all such trust was entirely misplaced. Indians, said Mrs. Naidu, once put their trust in British Liberals. They were disappointed woefully. They then put their trust in British Labour. Indian people found that British labour, just like British Liberals, failed Indians on all critical occasions in a number of times and failed to keep their renewed pledges. As a result of all these experiences of Liberal and Labour parties, India has now learned that she must learn to stand on her own legs and must look for liberty inside itself and seek no external aid to attain the national goal. What contribution, asked Mrs. Naidu, can British workers make to secure Indian emancipation when they have not been able to free themselves from their bonds. There could be no prospect of equal friendship between Indians and Britishers until the equality of India with Britain was recognised.

Mrs. Naidu took this occasion to reply to Mr. MacDonald, who was inclined to make much of the co-operation of the provincial legislatures in India. Mrs. Naidu assured the meeting that the co-operation of the provincial legislatures in no way altered the attitude of all-India by one jot. The resolutions of the provincial councils, Mrs. Naidu pointed out, were largely carried by votes of official nominated members and representatives of vested interests. India, she assured the meeting, would work out her own national salvation in her own way. She demanded to be free in all things, to rule her own people, to defend her own frontiers and to send her own embassies. "You shall come" said Mrs. Naidu "when India says you may. You shall go when India says you must".

The all-Parties Conference report, she said, was only an interim temporary formula of promise embodying just a common measure of agreement between the all political parties.

Mr. MAXTON followed Mrs. Naidu and expressed deep regret at the association of British Labour with the Simon Commission which, he said, was a definite attempt to make Indians believe that they would get something whereas the Tory Government had no intention of allowing India to escape from under Britain's heel. Mr. Maxton expressed the hope that by the time the Simon Commission submitted its report the Labour Government might be in power. If that happened, then it was important that before that time the rank and file of British Labour should make itself



heard and insist that Labour must approach India as equals, the only essential being that Britain should remove its hold on India as to cause minimum dislocation. Continuing Mr. Maxton said that the incident of Lord Birkenhead who appointed the Commission leaving the India Office at this stage was clear proof of indifference of Britain towards Indian problems. It was unthinkable that the man who established the Commission should regard it as so unimportant as to throw up his job in the middle.

Before the meeting was concluded a resolution protesting against Labour's participation in the labours of the Simon Commission and requesting Mr. Atlee to withdraw from the Commission failing which workers will take such action as may be necessary to repudiate him was unanimously passed.

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## INDIA IN THE

# British Commonwealth Labour Conference

Delegates from the ends of the British Empire assembled on July 2nd 1928, at the House of Commons, London for the opening of the British Commonwealth Labour Conference for the consideration of vital and fundamental problems affecting the nations of the Commonwealth.

Among the organisations invited to the Conference and which took part in it was the All-India Trades Union Congress (Messrs. D. Chaman Lal, Rev. C. F. Andrews, Mahbubul Huq, P. C. Bose, R. R. Bakhale).

The Agenda of the Conference was (1) Racial Problems and Problems of Government; (2) Inter-Commonwealth Relations: Political (3) World Peace, (4) State Trading within the British Commonwealth, (5) Migration, (6) Inter-Commonwealth Labour Relations: Industrial and Political, (7) Social Insurance Schemes: Reciprocity. The following is an account of the Conference issued by Mr. Mahbubul Huq, one of the Indian delegates to the Conference, to the press:—

Mr. J. Ramsay MacDonald, M.P., who presided over the first day's sitting addressed the delegates on the question of Food Supply, Migration, and Peace and in the course of his speech he said that "what you and I have to do—at any rate that is the view of the Labour Party here—is to get control of economic forces"; and as to the Commonwealth itself, proceeded the Ex-Premier, the Labour Party had a special view and a much higher view than that held by other schools and bodies of thought in this country.

"I am one of those" he declared, "who have always believed that there was a tremendous work in the world for the British Commonwealth of Nations to perform". "In this respect," continued Mr. MacDonald, amid applause, "I hope that, within a period of few months rather than years, there will be a new Dominion added to the Commonwealth of our Nations, a Dominion that will find self-respect as an equal within this Commonwealth. I refer to India."

## Mr. Chamanlal's Resolution.

Mr. Ben Turner presided on the second day and on the third day (4th July) the delegates elected Mr. J. Queen of Canada (Manitoba) as President. Dewan Chaman Lal with the consent of the other delegates from India put in the following resolution in sufficient time for discussion and ultimate acceptance or rejection, as the case may be, by the Conference. The resolution runs thus:

"This Conference, while reaffirming the resolution passed in 1925 pledging the support of all constituent bodies in the British Empire and Dominions to the grant of immediate self-government of India, condemns the appointment of the Simon Commission in so far as its appointment is in opposition to the wishes of the people of India and to the declared policy of the All-India Trades Union Congress and in so far as it guarantees no definite pledge of self-government and no equality of status or authority for the people's representatives even in the matter of investigation and enquiry".

When the Labour leaders of Britain got scent of this resolution a flutter was created amongst them and in their secret conclave it was settled that no resolution of whatsoever character would be allowed to be put in this Conference which has got no Constitution. The propriety of the enunciation of this principle though at so late stage of the Conference was put to the vote. Ceylon and Trinidad only voted with India and the result was that the resolution mentioned above was not allowed to be put in the Conference. But the First British Commonwealth Labour Conference adopted a similar resolution in 1925.

Mr. Chaman Lal should have declared his intention which he had been entertaining then that the Indian delegation had no other alternative but to withdraw from the Conference and taken that step then and there. But instead of doing that he waited for his chance to speak upon India and while speaking on Simon Commission and Bengal Ordinance some heat was created. Mr. Lansbury, M.P., delivered a speech in which he tried to impress upon the audience that it was the Labour Party alone that has as yet helped India on its way to Self-Government and some prominent Indian statesmen met him recently in the very Hall where the Conference is sitting and that they wanted a pure white Commission and that according to the usual procedure which prevails here when a Parliamentary Commission is appointed by Royal Warrant representatives of the different parties in the Parliament are taken in and they allowed two of their comrades to sit in the Commission also in the hope that they, the Party to which they belong, would fully know the facts and materials laid before the Commission and if necessary they may submit a minority report.

Rt. Hon. Arthur Henderson M.P. and Mr. H. Snell, M.P. also very clearly showed what the Labour Party has done towards India and what it should and can do for India and hinted that the Indian Delegation by their withdrawal from the Conference would miss a great opportunity and whatever befalls India in future the responsibility of it will be on the shoulders of the Indians themselves. Rev. C. F. Andrews in a feeling speech related the various persecutions to which he himself is subject at the hands of the police and the lawless acts under which persons are arrested or sent to jail without trial and enquiry, that the salt tax has much hit the poor Indians. He openly confessed before the Conference that he was not at all impressed by the speeches of Messrs. Lansbury, Henderson and Snell

and that the only course left to them was to withdraw from the Conference. At this stage the President of the Conference Mr. Queen said that the withdrawal of the Indian Delegation from the Conference would mean that besides India they have no interest in the affairs of the other members of the British Commonwealth of Nations. It was of course a very critical moment for us and whatever personal opinions each individual member of the Indian Delegation had as to the propriety of withdrawing from the Conference after hearing three of the brilliant spokesmen of the Labour Party in Britain, the Indian Delegation as pledged to the resolution passed at the Cawnpur session of A. I. T. U. Congress withdrew from the Conference.

### Another Account.

The following is the account of Mr. P. C. Bose, adviser to the Indian Labour Delegation to the Conference :—

As one identified with the rank and file of the Indian workers, I think it my duty to my Indian comrades to make a statement of the facts that led to our withdrawal from the British Commonwealth Labour Conference on the 3rd day of its sitting when the Indian question was taken up for discussion.

The immediate cause of our withdrawal was of course the peculiar procedure adopted on the 3rd day at the instance of certain British delegates, not to allow us to move our resolution on the participation of the British Labour Party in the Simon Commission in spite of repeated requests of the All India Trades Union Congress not to do so. But I think the situation will be quite clear if I say a few words about the activity of the British Labour Party and the consequent attitude of the Indian workers towards this party.

Since the formation of the British Labour Party the whole of India specially the Labour section was eagerly looking forward for something really good for India from their hand and up till 1924, inspite of various rumours, this belief in the party was quite firm and unshaken so much so that when the party come in power in 1924 the Indian workers became overwhelmed with joy and the late Mr. C. R. Das who was twice president of the A. I. T. U. C. sent congratulations to the party by Telegraph. But the first thing that the Indians received from the party was the Bengal ordinance, an arbitrary law by which the Indian Bureaucracy was empowered to arrest any Indian it liked and put to him in prison without any trial or giving the poor man a chance to defend himself. And the way in which this law is being carried out in India is simply horrible. A certain foreign delegate truly characterised it in the conference, as something scandalous in the twentieth century. Thus as regards the Simon Commission, the All-India Trades Union Congress at its last annual session at Cawnpore which was attended by some 200 delegates from about 60 different labour unions all over India, unanimously adopted a resolution to boycott the Commission in all respect and requested the British Trades Union Congress not to participate in the Commission and this was done in the presence of two British Labour delegates who attended the Cawnpore session of the A. I. T. U. C. But the British labour party had not the courtesy to take any notice of this resolution and the view of the Indian workers at all. Over and above that some member of the Labour party is saying that the Indian workers are for the Commission as if his personal opinion is more valuable than the resolution of the All-India Trades Union Congress. Then certain other members are observing that the Indian workers

should keep clear of politics. But why should 80 p.c. of the people of a country keep clear of politics? Is this the democratic policy of the Labour movement?

Now for these various reasons the feeling strongly prevalent in the minds of the Indian workers to-day is that so far as India is concerned the labour party is in no way different from other imperialistic bodies in the British Parliament. And the Indian Labour Delegation which consisted of the President of the A. I. T. U. C., an ex-president and several members of the central executive attended the conference in the hope that the British Labour Party after meeting with so many labour representatives of India might do something tangible to wipe out this feeling of mistrust from the minds of the Indian workers. But it is a matter of regret that the Indian delegation felt compelled to withdraw at the attitude of the British Labour Party.

The story of the actual withdrawal is simply this. The Indian delegates in proper time gave a notice of moving a resolution in the conference, expressing their view of the policy of the Labour party regarding Indian Self-Government and the Simon Commission. There was never before any suggestion that no resolution would be moved in the conference. On the other hand the conference during its previous session in 1925 actually adopted resolutions and Mr. Ramsay MacDonald in his opening speech this year also suggested that a resolution on world peace would be adopted. Besides, there is a provision in the draft rules that voting should be taken in cases of difference. So in due time the Indian delegates were ready to move their resolution when suddenly Mr. Henderson of the British Labour party moved that no resolution be moved at all. This motion was put to vote and carried by 5 to 3. So the Indian resolution was not allowed to be moved. The Indian delegates even after this waited for some time to clear the position. Mr. Chamanlal as the head of this Indian delegations made a statement at this stage to explain the policy adopted by the British labour party towards India and the Indian workers and asked the British delegates to make a reply. The reply was made but it only indicated the firmness of the party in their old policy of supporting the Imperialism on Indian matters. So the Indian delegates walked out of the conference as they unanimously decided to do in a case like this.

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# International Labour Conference.

*(Continued from Volume I, page 385).*

The following impressions of Dewan Chaman Lal, the Indian Delegate to the Conference, quoted from the 'Hindu' of Madras, will be a very interesting reading from the Indian view point :—

"The International Labour Conference meeting is almost like the meeting of the general staff at army headquarters. The staff captains and the majors, the colonels, the generals are all there. The only one missing seems to be the soldier in the ranks. All of a sudden, a day or two before the Conference meets, the hotels get busy, extra staffs are engaged, an extra polish given to the banisters and the floors, and there is a general feeling of expectancy, like the feeling of expectancy at the gate of a church in the eyes of an unfortunate bride awaiting the arrival of the bridegroom who never turns up. The evening before the Conference, the Hotel des Bergues was the centre of considerable excitement. Quite a large crowd of people, like the crowd that gathers round a snake charmer in the streets of India, gathered outside the hotel to watch the arrival of various celebrities. Sir Atul Chatterjee was one of these. Another was Dr. Paranjpye. Then, there was our friend, Dr. Rawley, Secretary of the Indian Delegation. The India Office suddenly awakened to the possibilities of a discussion on railway couplings at the Conference and as Mr. Graham, of the railways, happened to be on leave, he was as suddenly drafted into the delegation. Then there was finally, amongst the Government delegates and advisers, Mr. Walton, of the India Office, possessing a most charming face. But poor Mr. Walton seemed quite lost this time without Sir Louis Kershaw, whose appearance at the nearest approach to our conception of what Mephistopheles must have looked like !

The labour delegation dispersed at the railway station, myself consoled by the cool breezes of the lake, after a gruelling hot day in Paris ; and Mr. Mabbub-ul-Haq, of the Seamen's Union, Calcutta, and Mr. P. C. Bose, of the Coal Miners of Jbarria, in search of the Hotel d'Angleterre, where the labour delegation for years has made its headquarters, thus proving from the name their attachment to the British Empire. There has also been considerable fun in labour circles at the idea of my staying at the Hotel de Russie. But it is not Bolshevich Russie, very much bourgeois and highly respectable, sort of midway between the Bergues, which is diplomatic and the Beau-Rivage, which is American millionairish. All the three hotels overlook the lake and the Ile Rousseau, where has been built the statue of Jean Jacques. One occasionally sees enthusiastic young persons laying a wreath at the statue of the author of "Confessions."

The "Translating" Apparatus.

On the morning of the 30th of May, at 11 o'clock, all the ladies and gentlemen, delegates and advisers, representing 42 out of the 55 countries which are members of the International Labour Office, assembled at the Batiment Electoral to hear the speech of Mr. Arthur Fontaine, Chairman of the governing body of the International Labour Office, and to elect Mr. Saavedra Lamas as President of the Eleventh Session. It was an odd crowd,

and old crowd, I had almost said the old gang which we met in the Conference Hall. The only thing new that struck one's eyes was the wonderful apparatus installed in the hall for the purpose of assisting delegates to hear simultaneous translations. Each delegate was provided with two instruments which looked exactly like stethoscopes. By turning a switch, one could get on to the German, or the Italian, or the Spanish or the French translation, as the case may be, no matter in what language the speech was being delivered. At any rate, that was the intention, but unfortunately, something went wrong with the Instruments, and all that one could hear was a jargon of sounds, of ticks and clacks. It seemed as if the inventor had succeeded in formulating a new international language. However, there are tremendous possibilities, and the inventor will one day no doubt perfect his instrument which will mean that when the future labour leaders of India get up to speak in Bengalee or in Punjabee, or in Urdu, their speeches will be as they deliver them translated into German and French and English and Spanish, and if one wearies of a German translation, one can easily switch oneself on to the French translation in the twinkling of an eye. Imagine the amount of time that will be saved. I dare say there are still further possibilities in a system of this kind; perhaps in the years to come there will never be any need to hold an International Labour Conference at Geneva; probably by sitting at our headquarters in the various countries, instruments to ears, we will be able to make all the speeches and come to all the decisions by means of similar telephonic arrangements. But the humour of this will not be appreciated by prospective delegates and advisers to this Conference. Loud speakers had also been installed in the Conference Hall, as well as wireless microphones, but apparently it was not a propitious day as all the mechanical arrangements went wrong. Mr. Narottam Morarjee, who sits next to me, and Dr. Paranjpye, who sits next to him, tried their best to make the instrument work by speaking into the earpieces, shaking the tables and snapping the rubber tubes, but the instrument remained as obdurate as a Bombay mill striker, and the effort had to be given up in despair.

Suddenly, we heard the hammer knock on the table and Mr. Fontaine rose and informed the ladies and gentlemen assembled that it was his pleasant duty under the constitution to preside over the opening meeting of the Conference. He said that 136 delegates and 184 advisers had been sent to Geneva for this Conference to bring their technical competence, as Mr. Fontaine puts it, to bear over a wide range of subjects; and, he added, with obviously a twinkle in his eyes, their devotion to social progress.

In regard to ratifications there had been an increase of registered ratifications, from 230 to 300 this year. He was careful enough to warn the Conference that the governing body had taken the step to carry out Article 29 of the Washington Hours Convention and the corresponding articles of the other conventions. This, as your readers are aware, has been a very controversial point with the British Government and with many other Governments, but the governing body is empowered to submit every ten years a report regarding the working of the conventions, and it has now started to study the method of preparing the report which will be submitted to the Conference in 1931. Mr. Fontaine informed the Conference that the agenda for our meeting had to be settled by the governing body, but in reality the working agenda is previously settled by the Selection Committee. In a previous speech, Mr. Fontaine gave his blessing to the Conference and became

almost lyrical towards the end regarding the work of the League of Nations, particularly when he emphasised the necessity of a sense of solidarity, both between classes and between nations.

#### How the President is Elected.

A newcomer might have suspected that it was the right of the delegates assembled at the Conference to take a decision in the matter of the choice of their President. But then only a newcomer could have been guilty of such a suspicion. As a matter of fact, most of the formal work of the Conference is carried out by cliques and coteries consisting of old and experienced hands who have knowledge of the working of the constitution of the Labour Office, with the result that all formal decisions are cut and dried. It was thus that a certain gentleman from Spain, of the name of Count de Altea, rose and in his very poor French, said that he had the honour to propose the name of Mr. Carlos Saavedra Lamas as President of the Conference. And if you do not know who Mr. Saavedra Lamas is, then the nearest picture I can give you of his appearance is that which is to be found on the covers of an average 25 centimes French novel: cream coloured, suggesting rather than portraying a French aristocrat, high-collared, Victorian moustache, thin face: that is Mr. Saavedra Lamas. The contrast with Mr. Fontaine was vivid. Mr. Fontaine had a streaky greying beard of a peculiar shape, as if a rectangular wooden box had been attached to his face. Mr. Lamas is an ex-Minister of Justice and of Public Instruction, and an eminent personality of the Great Argentine Republic, in the University of Buenos Aires, and a Professor of Legislation. He is the author of a book which is supposed to be well-known to all of us. He is the President of the Commission set up by his Government to undertake a revision of the Labour Code. The proposition was supported by the employers' group, through Mr. Oersted, of Denmark. No workers' delegate had a word to say. It was not necessary and as there was no other suggestion before the Conference, Mr. Saavedra Lamas took the chair. Now, this election was so spontaneous in the eyes of the unsuspecting newcomer that the inevitable sequel followed of Mr. Lamas putting his hand in his inside coat-pocket, and pulling out a printed speech which he delivered with the preliminary remark that a great honour had been done to him in electing him President, and through him, to the country which he represents. And his speech, although very interesting from the point of view of South America, had not much of light to throw upon the question which face us at Geneva. But here is a sentence which is worth quoting from his speech, if for no other reason than for introducing the word "demographic." to your readers:—

"The gradual demographic changes which have throughout the ages caused old civilisations to perish and new ones to arise, do not offer an immediate prospect of great changes in the respective levels of civilisation, though they are causing the nations of the American Continent to increase in importance. For a long time to come, however, the newer countries will need to absorb new capital and population. They will obtain fresh population from the western countries, while capital will be derived from what may be called the economic democracies in which there are large numbers of small investors.

"America offers immense opportunities of experience and profit for the older countries. In the American Continent there are no racial hostilities and no traditional enmities. In its immense and fertile territory the expan-

sion of vital forces is not hemmed in by the principles of territorial integrity, and nature of itself restores the balance between the inequalities of distribution which exist among nations. There thus come into play unforeseen influences making for stability and harmony....."

Now, if you were foolish enough to think that South America generally is in the habit of indulging in a mild revolution every week end, you would think that Mr. Saavedra Lamas was talking through his hat when he talked about stability and harmony. And if you thought that every little State in South America was most jealous of its territorial integrity and gradually adopted from America, for its own purposes the Monroe doctrine, you would again think Mr. Lamas was exaggerating a bit when he talked about vital forces not being hemmed in by the principles of territorial integrity. But this is the way in which professors talk. And if they do not appear wise in their folly, they would certainly appear foolish in their wisdom. However, the last few sentences uttered by Mr. Lamas had a sincere ring in them, but whether they are really applicable to the organisation about which I am talking or not, is another question. He said :—

"Ladies and Gentlemen, the Labour Charter of the Treaty of Versailles which inspires and guides you is one of the finest documents in history. We find in it a magnificent expression of the brotherhood of man and of the highest ideals which the human mind could conceive after the long horrors of the War. The voice which proclaimed universal peace and justice was that of stricken humanity and her words express the noblest of conceptions. When you have translated them into law and practice, you will have cured modern society of its great unrest and suffering.....There are certain tasks which require to be begun, so to speak, at the end and it is indeed in this manner that all great achievements have originated. It is always in the pursuit of an ideal which for the moment cannot be realised that we find inspiration for the practical achievement of the future."

After that last sentence of his, I almost forgive him his Victorian moustacho.

At half past twelve, the Conference was over. And we proceeded to elect the members of the Selection Committee, which is roughly comparable with the Subjects Committee of the Indian National Congress. Sir Atul Chatterjee obtained a place on the Committee, and both Mr. Narottam Morarjee and myself obtained substitute places. But now all this came about is a matter which I must leave over for the next article.

After the delegates of the International Labour Conference had, in solemn conclave, elected their President, Mr. Saavedra Lamas, and after Mr. Saavedra Lamas had eloquently accepted the honour, the meeting adjourned in order to enable the three groups, namely, of workers, employers and Governments, to meet separately in order to elect their office-bearers and members of various Committees. The most important of the Committees were, firstly, the Minimum wage Fixing Machinery Committee, secondly, the Prevention of Industrial Accidents General Committee, and thirdly, the Committee to discuss the replies received from Governments ratified by them under Articles 4 and 5 of the Peace Treaty, known as the 408 Committee, fourth, the Selection Committee which, as I have already indicated, is the Subject's Committee of the Conference, the Dockers' Committee and the Railway Couplings Committee. It will be noticed that the Dockers' Committee and the Railway Couplings Committee are really adjuncts of the



General Committee on the Prevention of Industrial Accidents. Apart from these, the other Committees are not important and in the Workers' Group we were enabled to obtain seats on the Minimum Wage Fixing Machinery Committee, the Prevention of Accidents' Committee, the Selection Committee, and the Dockers' Committee. It was physically impossible to attend any more Committees as I had only two advisers with me; and Mr. Bakhle, who was unofficially deputed by the Trade Union Movement to act as Secretary to the Indian workers' delegation, had not arrived from Antwerp, where he had been attending a meeting of the International Textile Workers' Federation. We were glad to see him as he brought with him the news that the International Federation had allowed £1,500 for Indian workers at its annual session. There was a great deal of difficulty, however, in obtaining seats on these Committees, the reason being that the group representing the Amsterdam International has been in complete charge of the situation as far as the workers are concerned at Geneva. Messrs. Mertens, Oudgeest and Jouhaux, are the shining lights of this group and by means of various adjustments in the shape of favours given to their satellites they have, until this year, been in complete command over the workers' group. However, it was inevitable that we should come to a clash with this group, as we nearly did in the year 1925 when, after a great deal of difficulty, we succeeded in obtaining, for the representative of the Indian workers, a seat on the governing body as deputy member. The clash arose once again over the election for the governing body.

Under the constitution, each group has the right to select its own members to the governing body, and the Governments and the workers are allowed six full members and six deputy members each. Both Japan and India naturally wanted representation on the governing body, which the Amsterdam group was not willing to give. India, however, came up in the first list successful as a deputy member. But there was a tie in regard to Japan as against a Mr. Serrarens requesting the Catholic workers of Holland. Mr. Serrarens was the nominee of the Amsterdam Group. The first ballot showed that the Japanese and the Amsterdam proteges both got 15 votes each, and the second ballot showed that they got 14 votes each, and in the third ballot they again got 14 votes each.

Mr. Walker, representing the Australian workers, rose to the occasion and obtained the votes of the South American States, and I managed to obtain the votes of some European States, including Italy. The result was that both India and Japan obtained seats on the governing body. This fact was referred to by Mr. Rossoni, the Italian Workers' Delegate, in his speech, as meaning a definite defeat for the Amsterdam Group. Mr. Rossoni has been, year after year, attacked by the Amsterdam Group as not being representative of the Italian workers in so far as he represents the Union set up by Mussolini. Each year the protest has been launched and each year his credentials have been accepted. After these preliminary canters we set about our business fighting for a liberal convention regarding minimum wage. Meanwhile, the discussion went on in the Conference regarding the principle of "Safety First" and the general question of the Prevention of Industrial Accidents. It was an infructuous discussion as the attention of all the important delegates was concentrated on Committee work, except for the fact that Mr. Graham, from India, made a very brief contribution telling the world that a tour round India would mean a journey of 40,000 miles, and

that automatic couplings had been installed on the metre-gauge lines, and finally that 7 per cent of the fatal accidents to railway employees in India and 12 per cent of similar non-fatal accidents occurred during uncoupling of vehicles. He ended his brief speech by assuring the delegates of the cordial co-operation of the Government of India on the question of accidents to workers.

#### The Minimum age Committee.

And now, first of all, let me take the work of the Minimum Wage Committee. Mr. D. P. Khaitan was deputed by Mr. Narottam Morarjee as the Employers' Delegate to attend this Committee. He made an interesting statement to the effect that what he wanted was that the hands of Governments should not be tied down to any particular trades, but that a minimum wage fixing machinery should be generally applicable. Further, he stated that he would like that the minimum wage rates should be living wage rates. I heartily endorsed this proposition and moved two amendments: firstly, that the rate to be determined should be a living wage rate, secondly that the principle of equal work for men and women should be one of the guiding principles in determining wage for all classes of workers. In fact, this obligation regarding equal pay is contained in the Peace Treaty itself which, under Article 427, lays down this principle as one of the guiding features for all Governments. Naturally, all the associations which are fighting for women's rights in Europe over the question of equal pay for women inundated me with representation asking me not to give up the fight. I think I easily became the most popular figure in Geneva amongst the fair sex!

Eventually, after days of strenuous discussion, both the principles were incorporated in the recommendation attached to the Draft Convention.

#### Representation of Coloured Workers.

A great fight ensued in the Selection Committee in regard to two resolutions presented last year by the Indian Workers' Delegate regarding the representation of coloured workers. The first resolution asked Governments which have colonies or mandated territories to ensure the presence of representatives of coloured workers. The second referred particularly to the representation of Indian Workers and Negro Workers in South Africa. The first resolution was eventually recommended to the notice of all Governments. The second resolution was vehemently opposed by the South African delegate; and as it is possible, nay probable, that it would have broken the harmony that prevailed, I withdrew it in the end in order not to single out South Africa for special censure. Dr. Orenstein, a very able representative of the South African Government and all the delegates present were relieved of a great anxiety which nearly wrecked the harmony of the work of the Selection Committee.

A second feature in the Selection Committee was our resolution regarding firing on strikers. Eventually a juridical ruling was given that the resolution, as it meant interference in the internal affairs of a State, is not in order so far as it went beyond the provisions of the Peace Treaty.

Our resolution regarding housing and living conditions was accepted. The only other strenuous fight that took place in the Committees was the fight put up by Mr. Shanmukham Chetti, on the Railway Couplings Committee. The protagonists were Mr. Shanmukham Chetti and the Right Hon'ble J. H. Thomas, but it was an inconclusive fight.

## Committee Work at Geneva.

I do not know of any work which is more trying than Committee work at Geneva. The usual programme is that punctually at 9 o'clock each group meets to discuss the day's work and take stock of the situation. Punctually at 10-30 the Committees commence their work. Delegates disperse for lunch at 1 o'clock to meet again at 3 and sit usually until 6 in order to give them time enough to get into their dinner jackets and attend a delegation dinner. For it must not be forgotten that with all the work that is put in, the delegates have the time to mix with not only their own compatriots, but with representatives of all the countries which have sent delegations to Geneva. The most formal delegation functions are the British, the Canadian and the Presidential. Sir Malcolm Delevingne, British delegate, gave the first dinner at the Hotel des Bergues, where the Right Hon'ble J. H. Thomas arrived in a Norfolk jacket and flannel trousers, thus putting everybody at his ease. And as is the usual custom at such functions, Sir Malcolm related the usual after-dinner story about Harry Lauder who, on his way to perform at Glasgow one night, saw a little boy outside the theatre crying. "What is the matter with you my little man?" said he, and in between his sobs the little man said that he had lost a shilling which his mother gave him and now he could not go to the theatre to see Harry Lauder. The large-hearted Lauder put his fingers in his waist-coat pocket and fetched out two matches which he philanthropically handed to the little boy telling him to look for the lost shilling. I do not wish to be misunderstood; the level of intelligence at Geneva is not to be misjudged by an after-dinner story. But the function which was very representative of the spirit that reigns at Geneva, and more particularly in the International Labour Office, was the reception given by the President at the Hotel Carlton: There were 3,000 guests present and fire-works especially imported from France kept half of Geneva awake. Three bands were in attendance to provide music for the Genevese. The champagne the workers drank flowed like water. At 6 in the morning poor old Mr. Saavedra Lamas, Chairman of the International Labour Conference, was still shaking hands with his departing guests, but at 10-30, he sat in the presidential chair looking as fresh as a lark. The general opinion is that this reception is to be the end of all receptions, unless they put either Henry Ford or the Maharaja of Baroda in the chair next year! One of the functions I must not fail to mention was a lunch given by Mr. Albert Thomas to all the workers' delegates present at Geneva at the Club International, where Albert Thomas delivered a most elegant speech. He has been criticised a great deal. During his last official visit to Italy he did a most dreadful thing and that was to offer at a meeting the Fascist salute. Naturally the Amsterdam group, wanting to make propaganda out of this one fact in order to rehabilitate, as they think, their position in the eyes of the extremist section of labour, created a great deal of trouble for Mr. Albert Thomas. Mr. Thomas took this opportunity of reminding them that the creed of tolerance is a worthy creed: and if Amsterdam had not yet heard of the word "tolerance" it was high time that Amsterdam did. In order to counter-balance the effect of this remark, he went out of his way to say that he hoped the Japanese workers and Indian workers would join the Amsterdam International.

Mr. Tom Moore, Canadian workers' delegate wound up the proceedings reminding us in his speech of the remark made by the friend of a certain

great orator, when asked as to what he thought of the great orator's speech. "I agree with everything that you said my friend; but there was only one thing lacking in your speech." "And what was that?" asked the orator. The quick reply came: "You had three opportunities to sit down, and you missed them all."

Our stay in Geneva has been exceptionally interesting. The most important requisites for membership of the International Labour Conference, however, considering the nerve-racking tension that prevails, 18 hours out of the 24, in Conference circles, are an iron constitution which can stand five meals a day, complete deafness in order to prevent the international flow of oratory from driving one to a lunatic asylum, and a perfect misunderstanding of the constitutional procedure. Happy the man who possesses all these three requisites.

## The Minimum Wage Convention.

The text of the proposed Draft Convention and of the draft recommendation adopted by the Committee are as follows:—

Proposed draft convention concerning the creation or maintenance of minimum wage fixing machinery in certain trades.

### ARTICLE 1.

Each Member of the International Labour Organisation which ratifies this Convention undertakes to create or maintain machinery whereby minimum rates of wages can be fixed for workers employed in certain of the trades or parts of trades (and in particular in home working trades) in which no arrangements exist for the effective regulation of wages by collective agreement or otherwise and wages are exceptionally low. For the purposes of this Convention the term "trades" includes manufacture and commerce.

### ARTICLE 2.

Each Member which ratifies this Convention shall be free to decide, after consultation with the organisations, if any, of workers and employers in the trade or part of trade concerned, in which trades or parts of trades, and in particular in which home working trades or parts of such trades, the minimum wage fixing machinery referred to in Article 1 shall be applied.

### ARTICLE 3.

Each Member which ratifies this Convention shall be free to decide the nature and form of the minimum wage fixing machinery, and the methods to be followed in its operation;

Provided that (1) before the machinery is applied in a trade or part of a trade, representatives of the employers and workers concerned, including representatives of their respective organisations if any, shall be consulted as well as any other persons, being specially qualified by their trade or functions for the purpose, whom the competent authority deems it expedient to consult; (2) The employers and workers concerned shall be associated in the operation of the machinery, in such manner and to such extent, but in any case in equal numbers and on equal terms, as may be determined by national laws or regulations.

(3) Minimum rates of wages which have been fixed shall be binding on the employers and workers concerned so as not to be subject to abatement by them by individual agreement, nor by collective agreement except with the general or particular authorisation of the competent authority.

## ARTICLE 4.

Each Member which ratifies this Convention shall take the necessary measures, by way of a system of supervision and sanctions, to ensure that the employers and workers concerned are informed of the minimum rate of wages in force and that wages are not paid at less than these rates in cases where they are applicable. A worker to whom the rates are applicable and who has been paid wages at less than these rates shall be entitled to recover, by judicial or other legalised proceedings, the amount by which he has been underpaid, subject to such limitation of time as may be determined by national laws or regulations.

## ARTICLE 5.

Each Member which ratifies this Convention shall communicate annually to the International Labour Office a general statement giving a list of the trades or parts of trades in which the minimum wage fixing machinery has been applied, indicating the methods as well as the results of the application of the machinery and, in summary form, the approximate numbers of workers covered, the minimum rates of wages fixed, and the more important of the other conditions, if any established relevant to the minimum rates.

## Methods of Application.

## A

The General Conference of the International Labour Organisation :

Having adopted a Draft Convention concerning the creation or maintenance of minimum wage fixing machinery in certain of the trades or parts of trades in which no arrangement exist for the effective regulation of wages by collective agreement or otherwise and wages are exceptionally low, and

Desiring to supplement this Draft Convention by putting on record for the guidance of the members certain general principles which present practice and experience show to be calculated to produce the most satisfactory results in the application of any minimum wage fixing machinery in the trades or parts of trades concerned: Recommends that each Member should take the following principles and rules into consideration :

## I

(1) In order to ensure that each Member ratifying the Convention is in possession of the information necessary for a decision upon the application of minimum wage fixing machinery, the wages actually paid and the arrangements, if any, for the regulation of wages should be ascertained in respect of any trade or part of a trade to which employers or workers in the trade request the application of the machinery and furnish information which shows *prima facie* that no arrangements exist for the effective regulation of wages and that wages are exceptionally low.

(2) Without prejudice to the discretion left to the members by the Draft Convention to decide in which trades or parts of trades in their respective countries it is expedient to apply minimum wage fixing machinery, special regard might usefully be had to trades or parts of trades in which the workers employed are generally women.

## II

(1) The minimum wage fixing machinery, whatever form it may take (e. g. trade boards for individual trades, general boards for groups of trades, compulsory arbitration tribunals) should operate by way of investigation into

the relevant conditions in the trade or part of a trade concerned and consultation with the interests primarily and principally affected, i. e., the employers and workers in the trade or part trade, whose views on all matters relating to the fixing of the minimum rates of wages should in any case be solicited and be given full and equal consideration.

(2) (a) To secure greater authority for the rates eventually fixed, the general policy of the machinery should be that the employers and workers concerned, through representatives equal in number of having equal voting strength, should jointly take a direct part in the deliberations and decisions of the wage fixing body; in any case where representation is accorded to one side, the other side should be represented on the same footing. The wage fixing body should also include one or more independent persons whose votes can ensure effective decisions being reached in the event of the votes of the employers' and workers' representatives being equally divided. Such independent persons should be selected in agreement with or after consultation with the employers' and workers' representatives on the wage fixing body.

(b) in order to ensure that the employers' and workers' representatives shall be persons having the confidence of those whose interests they respectively represent, the employers and workers concerned should be given a voice as far as is practicable in the circumstances in the selection of their representatives, and if any organisations of the employers and workers exist these should in any case be invited to submit names of persons recommended by them for appointment on the wage fixing body.

(c) The independent person or persons mentioned in paragraph (a) should be selected from among men or women recognised as having the necessary qualifications for their duties and as being dissociated from any interest in the trade or part of the trade concerned which might be calculated to put their impartiality in question.

(d) Where a considerable proportion of women are employed in a trade or part of trade, allowance should be made as far as possible for the inclusion of women among the workers' representatives and of one or more women among the independent persons.

### III

For the purpose of determining the minimum rates of wages to be fixed the wage fixing body should in any case take account of the necessity of enabling the workers concerned to maintain a suitable standard of living. For this purpose regard should primarily be had to the rates of wages being paid for similar work in trades where the workers are adequately organised and have concluded effective collective agreements, or, if no such standard of reference is available in the circumstances, to the general level of wages prevailing in the country or in the particular locality.

Provision should be made for the review of the minimum rates of wages fixed by the wage fixing bodies when this is desired by the workers or employers associated with the machinery.

### IV

For effectively protecting the wages of the workers concerned and safeguarding the employers affected against the possibility of unfair competition, the measures to be taken to ensure that wages are not paid at less than the minimum rates which have been fixed should include:—

(a) arrangements for informing the employers and workers of the rates in force; (b) official supervision of the rates actually being paid, and

(c) sanctions for remedying and preventing infringements of the rates in force. (1) As a means of ensuring that the workers, who are less likely than the employers to have their own means of acquainting themselves with the wage-fixing body's decisions, may be kept informed of the minimum rates at which they are to be paid, employers might be required to display full statements of the rates in force in readily accessible positions on the premises where the workers are employed, or in the case of home workers on the premises where the work is given out or returned on completion or wages are paid.

(2) A sufficient staff of official inspectors should be employed, with powers analogous to those proposed for factory inspectors in the recommendation concerning the general principles for the organisation of systems of inspection adopted by the General Conference in 1923, to make investigations among the employers and workers concerned with a view to verifying whether the minimum rates in force are in fact being paid and taking such steps as may be authorised to deal with infringements of the rates.

As a means of enabling the inspectors adequately to carry out these duties, employers might be required to keep complete and authentic records of the wages paid by them, or in the case of home workers to keep a list of the workers with their addresses and provide them with wage books or other similar record containing such particulars as are necessary for verifying the wages actually paid with the rates in force.

(3) In cases where the workers are not in general in a position individually to enforce by judicial or other legalised proceedings their rights to recover wages at the minimum rates in force, such further sanctions should be provided as may be considered effective for preventing infringements of the rates.

## B

The General Conference of the International Labour Organisation thinks it right to call the attention of Governments to the principle affirmed by Article 427 of the Peace Treaty that men and women should receive equal remuneration for work of equal value.

### Minority Report Submitted by Employers' Group.

On behalf of the majority of the Employers' Representatives I have the honour to request that the Minority Report herewith should be appended to the Report submitted by Dr. Feig, the Reporter of the Committee :

During the discussion which took place in the Committee all the amendments proposed by the Employers' Group were rejected, some by a small majority.

The Employers' Representatives specially pressed but in vain to have the Committee's decision restricted to home working trades, their argument being that it was of primary importance to take account of the experience already acquired by a number of States in minimum wage fixing for home working trades only. It should be noted that in the text adopted to all trades whatsoever, several States would hesitate to follow the International Labour Office in its somewhat venturesome undertaking on a question which Governments as well as employers and workers have always regarded as a matter of an exclusively national character. It was on these considerations that Article I in the employers' amendment was based.

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# India in Parliament.

## Debate on Indian States Problems.

Lord OLIVIER gave notice in the House of Lords on the 5TH DECEMBER 1928 to call attention to questions arising in regard to the government of Indian States not forming parts of any provinces of British India to ask His Majesty's Government whether they have in view any scheme for dealing with such questions concurrently and consistently with any amendments of the Constitution of British Indian Government that may commend themselves to Parliament in the outcome of the inquiry now being made by the Commission which has been appointed under the Government of India Act and to move for papers.

Lord HARDINGE of Penshurst said in the course of the debate:—My Lords, I cannot help thinking that the motion which has been put before your Lordships by the noble Lord is somewhat premature in view of the fact that it is made before the publication of the Simon and Butler reports. I do not propose to enter into abstruse questions of the constitutional reform of the Indian States, but in view of what has been said by the noble Lord, I should like to say a few words upon the position of the Ruling Princes. In the first place, I would like to emphasise the fact that the Ruling Princes are one of the most loyal and devoted elements in India. Their loyalty to the King and to the Government is unsurpassed. Although memories are short now-a-days I would like to remind your Lordships of the offers made by the Ruling Princes at the out-break of the War—offers of men, money, hospital ships, aeroplanes and every conceivable thing that might be needed. These offers were made spontaneously and they were all fulfilled. I may even mention that there was to my knowledge one of the Maharajas who offered to sell all his jewels to provide money for the War. These offers, when reported by the Secretary of State, evoked great enthusiasm in both Houses of Parliament. Heavy sacrifices of men and money were made and no help that was ever asked of them was refused. Several of the Ruling Princes led their own contingents to the seat of war.

Since those days, what were in my time in India mere meetings of a certain number of Princes under the "aegis" of the Viceroy to discuss educational and other questions and questions affecting themselves, have developed into the creation of a Chamber of Princes where such questions and their general policy come under discussion. They are now a corporate body with definite policies of their own and form an integral part of the machinery of the Government in India. Formerly the affairs of the Ruling Princes were dealt with by the Government of India or in the department. The absurdity of this arrangement induced the creation of a separate Political Department dealing exclusively with the affairs of the Ruling Princes and under the direct supervision of the Viceroy. Moreover, in recent years control of the Ruling Princes has been gradually withdrawn from the Provincial Governments and concentrated under the Political Department of the Government of India. I recount these facts to show that while rapid constitutional progress has been made in British India, the Ruling Princes have been slowly



developing into a corporate body alongside of British India but practically independent of it.

It cannot be denied that the forms of Government in British India are more advanced than in the Indian States, but nevertheless the tendency in these States is towards progress, not unwisely rapid, and in spite of the criticisms of the noble Lord these States as a whole are well governed and meet the needs of the population. There are some States such as Mysore, which really serves as a model and could not be better administered. Of course, there must be, and will always be, questions at issue between the Ruling Princes and the Government of India, and these questions can well be settled by conference and by arbitral or other tribunals, but I can conceive no step that would be more of a step backwards, or that would be more resented by the Ruling Princes, than any scheme by which they might be placed in a position of subservience to, or at the mercy of the Legislative Assembly of even a Central Government or of a Provincial Government. The Government of India, as your Lordships are aware, has treaties of alliance and otherwise with the Ruling Princes. I look forward to the day when these treaties with a very loyal patriotic and devoted body may be developed and strengthened to the mutual advantage of this country and of India.

The Marquess of Reading said :—My Lords, the subject which has been introduced by my noble friend is undoubtedly of the utmost importance, but I confess that I am a little perplexed as to the object of raising at this moment when we have the Harcourt Butler Committee dealing especially with some points affecting the Ruling Princes and the Simon Commission, at present in India, whose Report we shall all of course await with the greatest interest. One wonders at the suggestion that some scheme should be put forward by the Government at this moment. I presume it is only intended to be for private discussion and not in any way public debate when we have not yet the Report of the Commission before us. I should have thought it quite unnecessary to intervene in this debate but for some observations which fell from my noble friend. I imagine that he had no intention whatever of reflecting in any way upon the Ruling Princes as a body.

Lord Olivier : Hear, hear.

The Marquess of READING : Certain observations made by him gave his view of the good Government in a great many States, but on the other hand he did give indications which might disturb the Ruling Princes very much. My noble friend Lord Hardinge, who has just addressed your Lordships, has dealt with some aspects of the Ruling Princes' constitutional position. I would take the opportunity of saying that during the whole of my experience in India, no more loyal body could be found than the Ruling Princes. Lord Hardinge spoke of the services they rendered in the war and their desire to help in every way. During my period of office such questions did not arise, but nevertheless there are numbers of considerations that constantly arise in which the Ruling Princes might make difficult objections, and I desire to state emphatically that I have never found the Princes, speaking of them as a body—there may be individual cases, of course—slow to recognise the necessity of making any concession or falling in with any view that might be put by the Government of India, founded upon the desire to protect or strengthen India or in any way to help Indian interests.

There are, of course, questions affecting their own States which are

discussed with the Viceroy and the Government of India. Your Lordships are aware that under the present constitution the affairs of the Princes are dealt with by the Governor-General in Council—that is, by the Viceroy with the assistance of the Executive Council. There is no Minister for the Political Department, but their affairs are dealt with entirely by the Viceroy himself with the assistance of the Political Secretary. Those of your Lordships who may not be familiar with the constitutional position may need to be reminded that the Departments have their members of the Council who meet in what is the equivalent of a Cabinet with the Viceroy, but the political affairs that relate to the Princes are dealt with entirely by the Viceroy himself—that is to say, he has charge of them, instead of their being in the charge of any particular member. It is on account of this procedure that some difficulties suggested themselves to the Princes in view of an extension of the reforms.

There is no doubt, as my noble friend truly said, that they are alarmed at the motion that they may find themselves dealing with the Governor-General in a Council composed of the Governor-General and Ministers responsible to the Legislative Assembly and the Council of State, or in other words to the Central Indian Legislature, and that they would thus find a change in the position that they occupy at present. Strictly speaking, of course, this would not be so, because they would still be in relation with the Governor-General in Council, but at the same time the position of the Governor-General would have been very materially changed. As your Lordships are aware, the members of the Council are appointed by His Majesty and are responsible to the King and the British Parliament,

What changes, if any, will be made, and whether any recommendation is to be made by the Simon Commission which will affect indirectly the position of the Princes, nobody can tell, and I do not at the moment intend to speculate upon the report which will, in due course, be presented. But I do desire to emphasise that the Princes themselves, so far as I am aware—and I think I understand their views in this matter—wish to maintain as closely as they can relations with the Viceroy as the representative of the King. They take their stand upon their treaties and they claim that they should have access, as they have always had, to the Viceroy, in order to put before him any facts that they desire. I can imagine very well that, if a change were to be made in the appointment of the members of the Council, this would very materially affect the position of the Princes, and indeed no one can gainsay that they would have to consult upon their affairs with the Governor-General and Ministers who would be responsible to the Legislative Assembly. In other words, they would then be subject to the Legislative Assembly, and at present they are not. It is true that under the constitution there are restrictions upon the legislation that can be proposed in the Legislative Assembly and very definite limitations upon the matters that the Assembly can raise.

There is one other point which I think I must touch upon. I refer to the question of the relation of the Princes to the Paramount Power, in other words to the Crown, which is, of course, of the utmost importance. I do not wish in any way to travel outside the scope of this question by dilating upon the difficulties that present themselves, and apparently, to some extent at any rate, may by agitating the mind of the Princes, but in the Despatch that I sent containing the answer to a letter of the Nizam of Hyderabad

I did attempt, in conjunction with the Secretary of State, to define the exact position. I think that one special consideration must always be borne in mind. Crown is the Paramount Power, and the Princes have their different degrees of sovereignty which vary among their numbers. When you proceed to those that have no internal sovereignty, you find many more restrictions and limitations, but with regard to those 90 or 100 Princes that have undoubted internal sovereignty their position is that they administer their own affairs. They do not of course deal with foreign affairs. Those are dealt with by the Governor-General in Council, and they include all matters which affect the military position of India or even her position in relation to the air. Here there can be no question that the Paramount Power is supreme, and the relations that have been laid down and are well understood, and were the subject of very close search and study before the Despatch was made, are now pretty clearly defined.

#### Position of the Chamber of Princes.

There are, however, some questions which have never been settled and are now being discussed before the Committee over which Sir Harcourt Butler presides. Sir Harcourt Butler is specially qualified to preside over that Committee, in that he was at one time during his service in India a very able Political Secretary and has also been Governor of the United Provinces. The relations are very definite. We do not interfere with the internal administration of a State unless there is what is termed gross maladministration. I think it would be unwise to attempt to define more closely what is meant by that term. It is sufficient to enable the Governor-General in Council to intervene when there is a condition of affairs in the State under a Ruling Prince which is one of maladministration, not merely in one particular instance, but of such a character that it can be described as gross. All these matters are, as it seems to me, very clearly understood at the present moment, but there are questions which have agitated the Princes, in relation, for example, to tariffs, which have been imposed in India and which have made certain difficulties.

I am not going to discuss them, however, because they are the subject of consideration, but I must draw attention to what Lord Hardinge said with regard to the Princes and the rights that they have in their Chamber of Princes. To talk of them as a corporate body, in the sense in which he used the term is, I think, going a little further than is justified by the constitution. The Chamber of Princes has the power, and indeed the duty, of discussing certain matters, but there are limits, and one must always remember that some of the most powerful and important Princes do not attend the Chamber of Princes. They make a practice of not attending, and consequently one can hardly say that you have the views of all the Princes in any resolution passed by the Chamber of Princes. Whatever the Princes may do, I feel sure that they will not desire to be placed under the Legislative Assembly. My impression is that they have never hesitated to make that clear, and anyone at all familiar with the subject will understand that. Indeed, it would abrogate the rights which they have by reason of the internal sovereignty which they now enjoy, quite apart from British India. Their resolutions to British India are simply those to which I have referred, and there is no intervention in the internal affairs of the State except when there is what is termed gross maladministration. My view of the matter is that if the Government was in fact at this moment

considering any scheme, I should imagine that they would not make these preliminary discussions or considerations public at the present moment. To do so would be a grievous mistake, and I think a departure from constitutional practice, when you have the Commission of Sir John Simon actually in India at the present moment.

I feel a little anxiety aroused by the observations made by the noble Lords, who certainly did not commit himself to any specific reform but who seemed to indicate sympathy with the view that the internal sovereignty of the Princes must be placed in some way, by the British Government through the Government of India, upon a constitutional basis. That is a very grave departure to take and it involves the changing of the sovereignty which the Princes at present enjoy. It may be right or wrong—I am not going to discuss at the present moment—but I hope that it will not be thought, from anything which may be said in this debate, that there is a desire on the part of the Government, or at any rate of the Party to which I belong, to change the system of sovereignty under which the Ruling Prince rules. What we have always aimed at in India, as I have understood, and what was meant in the various discussions which took place before the Government of India Act was passed, was that gradually there should be a reform of the Indian States from within the States, and not in any way forced upon them by the Government of India or the British Crown; that in due course of time, no doubt, as what we term wider ideas and broader views prevailed, there might be a greater desire for a more constitutional form of government within the Ruling States.

What I do wish to emphasise is that I cannot myself conceive that any Government would seek to force that upon the Sovereign States, and indeed it may be a question whether they would have the right to do so under the treaties which exist between the Crown and the Princes, which gave the Princes their rights of internal sovereignty. My main purpose intervening in this debate was to make it clear that the Party to which I belong have no idea of forcing in any way upon the States a different constitution from the one which they at present enjoy. That, however, is a different thing from saying that there may not be discussions in the future between the Princes and the Government of India, as the constitutional movement develops in India, for the purpose of arriving at some changes, but those are matters which must be left to, and which, I think, must depend upon the consent of, the Princes themselves.

#### Tribute to Mysore.

Certain steps have already been taken. It is very difficult indeed to find a State which is better administered than Mysore, which is always regarded as a model. As Lord Hardinge said there are others—it would be invidious to single them out—but equally, for the sake of truth, it must be said that there are some where it is very desirable that a more liberal form of Government should be introduced, if it were possible. No one would suggest for a moment that all these States are excellently governed—there are exceptions—but even with regard to any question of intervention your Lordships may be aware that an elaborate system was devised by which a Prince, before any of his powers can be either taken from him or be reduced or modified in any way, or before any deposition can be resorted to, may be heard by a commission on which there must be at least two Princes, a Judge of the High Court, and two other selected persons, so that you have a

tribunal of five. That system already exists for the purpose of preventing what I will call drastic measures in relation to the affairs of any Prince, without giving him an opportunity of being heard before a commission which was agreed with the Princes at the time when we were discussing the Reforms.

It is now a part of the constitution, or at least a part of the agreement arrived at with the Princes. Even that is limited. It only applies when it is intended to take away or restrict in any way some of the powers which a Prince enjoys. In all other matters it is of the essence that the Crown is the Paramount Power and the Ruling Princes with their internal sovereignty have that limitation placed upon them, that they are subject and must remain subject, to the Paramount Power, which is in itself the best means for the protection of the Princes both from aggression from the sea—if, that were contemplated—and upon land. The security which the Princes enjoy, and have now for a very considerable time enjoyed, is due to the fact that the Paramount Power takes charge and directs them. I think that it is very necessary that we should always remember that. That is naturally regarded as the key of the whole position and it was largely in order to make that clear that the despatch was written to which my noble friend has referred. In relation to the matter under debate at the present moment, I can only express the hope which I fancy will be realised, that the Government will not be drawn into any premature disclosure of what it may do given certain considerations which no one yet knows and assuming certain things to happen of which no one has at present the remotest idea.

VISCOUNT PEEL, the Secretary of State for India, said :—My Lords, the questions which have been placed upon the paper by the noble Lord, Lord Olivier, are very far-reaching, and touch very difficult and profound questions affecting the Government of India. The motion of the noble Lord, however, would be fully justified. I think, if only by the fact that it has produced two such very important and very interesting statements as those we have had from two noble Lords who speak with very great authority and full knowledge of Indian problems, and especially on questions connected with the Ruling Princes. Under most of these questions raised by the noble Lord there is the problem of the relationship between the Paramount Power and the States, and this problem is at present, as the noble Marquess has said, under reference to the Committee presided over by Sir Harcourt Butler.

Perhaps I may remind the House of the terms of reference to that Committee. They are as follows :—

“(1) To report upon the relationship between the Paramount Power and the States, with particular reference to the rights and obligations arising from

- (a) treaties, engagements and “sanads”; and
- (b) usage, sufferance and other causes and—”

this does not so directly bear on the point mentioned by the noble Lord—

(2) to inquire into the financial and economic relations between British India and the states, and to make any recommendations that they may consider desirable or necessary for their more satisfactory adjustment.”

When this Committee reports, His Majesty's Government will have, so far as the States' side of the matter is concerned, the material upon which to proceed to whatever further consideration may be necessary of questions either as to the relations between the Paramount Power and the States or as to the relations between the States and British India. But until the report

of the Committee is received it is undesirable to enter into a discussion of such questions on merely speculative or hypothetical lines; and in that respect I think the noble Marquess was right in his divination of the attitude I should be obliged to take up.

The noble Lord's reference to further amendments of the Constitution of British India is at present equally speculative or hypothetical, and when he asks whether His Majesty's Government have in view any scheme for dealing with questions arising in regard to the Indian States, concurrently and consistently with any such amendments. I can only say that they have not, and that any definite scheme would at this stage clearly be premature. Of course, I do not wish to say that His Majesty's Government will not use their best endeavours to look ahead into the future and to examine into these very complex and difficult questions. But their solution can only be approached stage by stage and with a full appreciation of the necessity for caution and deliberation.

What I have said hitherto must be understood as referring to questions coming under the head of relations either between the States and the Paramount Power or between the States and British India, but the noble Lord has devoted some portion of his remarks to questions which, though obviously connected with the problem which I have been discussing, must be recognised in the first place as coming in a different category—namely, that of constitutional or administrative arrangements within the States themselves. Unless this question had been raised I should have thought it undesirable if not improper for me to enter upon it now; but one is anxious to avoid any misunderstanding, and I cannot let the noble Lord's observations pass without some reference to them. I must, however, limit myself to some very general observations and I cannot, of course, enter upon any question of their particular or precise and actual application. I might remind your Lordships—it is familiar, of course, to the noble Lord opposite—that the term “Indian States” is of very wide application. There are 500 or 600 of them, varying to the greatest possible extent in size and importance. At one end of the scale is the great State of Hyderabad with an area of over 82,000 square miles and a population of 12,500,000. At the other end, where we deal with what are more properly described as estates rather than States, we have small areas of less than a square mile with a hundred or two hundred inhabitants. It is obvious that very different considerations must apply to the States at these different ends of the scale. With that reservation perhaps I can now speak in rather more general terms.

First let me remind the House—though I do not see that my observation bears a very close application to what has been stated by the noble Lord opposite—of the well-known passage to which he has referred in the statement of the noble Marquess, Lord Reading. He read a portion of it, and I think I should also like to read it because it is a very important and, as the noble Marquess said, a very carefully considered statement. As he also said, it was written to His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad. The passage is as follows:—

“The right of the British Government to intervene in the internal affairs of Indian States is another instance of the consequences necessarily involved in the supremacy of the British Crown. The British Government have indeed shown again and again that they have no desire to exercise the right without grave reason. But the internal, no less than the external,

security which the Ruling Princes enjoy is due ultimately to the protecting power of the British Government, and where Imperial interests are concerned or the general welfare of the people of a State is seriously affected by the action of its Government, it is with the Paramount Power that the ultimate responsibility for taking remedial action, if necessary, must lie. The varying degrees of internal sovereignty which the Rulers enjoy are all subject to the due exercise by the Paramount Power of this responsibility."

This is a general statement, of course, of the rights and duties of the Paramount Power. But, in regard to such questions as those of the introduction of changes in the machinery or methods of Government in the States, I must point out that, however important and far-reaching these questions are, they are primarily questions of internal administration which, as such, cannot, generally speaking, be regarded as coming very directly within the purview of the Paramount Power.

I do not think I can with very great advantage pursue this question much further at the present. But it is obvious that questions of internal administration must be present to the minds of all who endeavour, from the point of view either of the British Government or of the Indian Rulers themselves, to look ahead into the future of India as a whole or of the States individually. At a time when constitutional changes are under consideration in British India, it is inevitable that much attention should be directed, both in the Press and on the public platform, to the States. Conditions in the States vary greatly and what might be appropriate and timely in one might well be inappropriate or premature in another. But I need hardly say that the Rulers of many of the States have already shown that they appreciate modern ideals of good administration and strive within the resource at their disposal to attain to them. The Viceroy, in his speech announcing the India States Committee, took the opportunity of reminding the Princes that in his view, the more their administration approximated to the standards of efficiency demanded by enlightened public opinion elsewhere, the easier it would be to find a just and permanent solution of the problem of the future relations between the States and British India. Many of the leading Princes themselves are, as I know, very much alive to the importance of this subject; and I know that some of them have of their own initiative taken up the question of reviewing their administration with a view to inaugurating, where they do not already exist, such measure as the promulgation of a definite code of law to be administered by a Judiciary independent of the Executive, and the settlement upon a reasonable basis of the purely personal expenditure of the Ruler as distinguished from the public charges of administration. The two noble Lords who have spoken have paid very just tributes to the loyalty and devotion of the Princes of India, and I should like very respectfully to associate myself with what has been said by those two noble Lords upon that subject.

There is only one question that was raised by the noble Lord, Lord Lamington, who has changed his place though not his point of view, as I understand, in the House. He was good enough perhaps he will excuse my saying that the notice was received a very short time before this discussion, and so I must answer him rather more briefly than I might otherwise have done. I am not sure that the Government, I am not in fact aware that the Government of India have received any recommendations from the feudatory nobles of the Indian States. I thought possibly the noble Lord was referring

to the case of the guaranteed Thakurs in the Gwalior State. As regards that case, I may say, that the British Government at the beginning of the nineteenth century, in effecting a settlement in central India, mediated and guaranteed the relations between the Rulers and the petty chieftains under them. In view of improvements gradually effected in the Gwalior administration there no longer existed the same justification for intervention between the durbar and the Chiefs; and in 1921 the Government of India made new arrangement under which the Political Department of the Government of India withdrew from direct interference between the Durbar and the Thakurs, and fresh sanads in perpetuity were issued to the Chiefs in question by the Gwalior Durbar. It was, however, explicitly laid down that the pledges originally given by the British Government must remain inviolable. Representations from some of the feudatories in connection with this new arrangement came before me as the Secretary of State for India in 1924, and questions raised by others are, I believe, at present before the Government of India.

Then, as regards the question whether the feudatories would have an opportunity to make representations during the discussion on reforms, if any feudatory is apprehensive as to how changes in British India may react upon his own position he could no doubt express his feeling to his Ruler. If the reference is to any grievance which a feudatory might have against his Ruler, it is open to the feudatory who may consider himself unjustly treated, as to other subjects of an Indian State, to seek redress from the Government of India. Perhaps the noble Lord will content himself with that rather brief answer to the question which he asked. As to the noble Lord opposite (Lord Olivier), though I do not charge him with wishing to air his knowledge on the subject—he has raised very important questions—I am sure he will agree that they are so speculative and depending upon such hypothetical considerations in the future that he will be satisfied if I have not given him a more definite answer than I have been able to do to-day.

Lord Lamington: I should like to ask the noble Viscount whether he will consider how these feudatory chiefs may make a representation.

#### Lord Olivier's Reply to Debate.

Lord Oliver, winding up the debate, said: My Lords, I shall have the satisfaction, as the noble Viscount expressed it, that my humble motion has elicited very interesting and important speeches from Lord Hardinge and the noble Marquess, Lord Reading. I also can congratulate myself in having elicited from the noble Viscount [Viscount Peel] a very interesting and carefully considered statement upon some of the questions I raised, and I thank him for it. I think the debate has been of great interest, but there are some slight misunderstandings which I should like to clear away arising out of the speeches that have been made. In the first place the noble Lord, Lord Hardinge, seemed to think that it was relevant to my Question that he should set forth what we none of us for a moment disagree with—namely, the great value of the services and the great loyalty of the Princes, and the admirable character of many of them. We all agree with that, but that was not relevant to my Motion. My Motion was relevant to consideration of the question dealt with by the noble Marquess.

It is obvious that in any constitutional development we shall have to consider the position of the Rulers, who number something like six hundred. I ask: Are the Government not prepared with a scheme for dealing with



the question? That is to say, are they not prepared to set up a further body of Inquiry? I do not ask them to consider a scheme immediately. I ask them to set up a tribunal or a Committee for dealing with the matter. The noble Marquess and the noble Viscount said that was premature. I cannot deny that the noble Viscount has given a very good official answer to me and I should not have expected any other answer; probably if I had been in his place I should not have made any other answer.

Viscount Peel: You would have been more careful than I have been.

Lord Olivier: I might have had to be more careful. I accept the noble Viscount's official answer and I shall not press for Papers if the House will allow me to withdraw my motion. The noble Lord, Lord Lamington, made one of my points in his reference to the Harcourt Butler Committee. That Committee does not in the slightest degree have within its terms of reference anything which enables them to deal with the interests of the four hundred odd States. I ask: What means are the Government taking to deal with this question? With regard to the Committee reference which the noble Viscount was good enough to read to us, it is limited and does not deal with the constitutional questions which arise. I go further and I say that the reference to the Simon Commission also does not deal with any of these questions. There is nothing in the reference to the Simon Commission that would enable us to imagine that any question of the Indian States was at all involved. I must perforce accept the view of the noble Viscount, who agrees with the noble Marquess, Lord Reading, that until the Simon Commission has reported you cannot go into those questions. That is not my own view of what is possible, but I have to accept the statement.

Finally, there seems to be some suggestion that I made criticism of the Indian Princes. The noble Lord, Lord Hardinge, seemed to think I had attacked them. I certainly did not attack them. I gave credit, I hope, to what I know of the admirable rule of many of them, though I said, incidentally, that some of them have not been good Rulers. My point was that, generally speaking, they are all absolute monarchs. The noble Marquess and the noble Viscount seemed to approve of absolute monarchy, but personally I do not. I do not think absolute monarchy is a good institution. That was the sole extent of my criticism of the Princes. I now beg leave of the House to withdraw my Motion.

*The Motion, was by leave, withdrawn.*

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# Debate on Indian Affairs.

At the second reading of the appropriation bill in the House of Commons on the 2ND AUGUST 1928, Labourite Mr. Johnston initiated the discussion on the Indian affairs on behalf of the Opposition and protested against the system of relegating the affairs of 380 million people to an hour or two among the scraps at the end of the session.

After quoting evidence given before the Indian Agricultural Commission regarding the infantile mortality, he said that after all these years, trouble in India was not political. The problem was insufficiency of food. He urged the House to pay attention more often to the problem of how to deal with the question of raising the purchasing power of the ryot incidentally relieving considerably the unemployment problem in Britain.

Mr. Johnston said that all that was necessary now was to increase the purchasing power of the ryot by supplying him with better implements and preventing his increased productivity being stolen from him by increased rents. He appealed to Earl Winterton to take up the question as a question of the State policy when the Labourites would whole-heartedly respond.

Mr. Pilcher (Conservative) suggested an inquiry into the possibility of imperial loan directed solely to the development of irrigation and co-operative movement in India which would gradually result in an increase in the purchase of ploughs and other goods. He urged the members, particularly the Labourites, to take the view of Mr. Johnston and Col. Wedgwood that in India, economics was more important than politics.

Mr. Saklatvala read out his letter to Mr. Baldwin and declared that India's first and last problem was to overthrow the British rule.

Mr. Purcell said that India was not so much suffering from imperialism as from stomach trouble. India wanted food but would not get it by mere transference from the White to the Black. India would not improve under the native Government. He suggested that His Majesty's Government and the Government of India should as speedily as possible organise the work people into Trade Unions to enable them to face the employers and obtain better standards of living. That would be the swiftest step towards freedom to which they were entitled. If a dozen Trade Union organisers went to India, it would be possible to organise the Railwaymen on such a basis that they would be disciplined from the view-point of the working class organisation and have someone to negotiate for them.

Mr. Purcell expressed the opinion that the Indians themselves might set better example than seeking the victory, of which Mr. Saklatvala spoke.

Earl Winterton remarking that this was the sole occasion on which the Indian affairs had been discussed in the house in this session said, that the Government had not been remiss in this matter. Responsibility rested solely on the opposition. They had twenty allotted supply days but never asked for a day. There was never a Liberal present at any Indian debate and only one was present to-night. He characterised it as a ridiculous state of affairs when the only Indian debate in the session began at ten in the

evening and at mid-night. He was expected to answer questions covering the whole range of debate.

As regards agriculture, he asked the House not to be too gloomy and said that more had been done for the improvement of methods of cultivation and economic position of the cultivator in the past twenty-five years than in any previous five-hundred years. There was a remarkable increase in the number of Co-operative societies also, there were numerous social institutions endeavouring to raise the status of the worker and increase hygiene, health and knowledge. He could give dozens of examples of how Social India was advancing when the members suddenly criticised the poverty and position of the ryot. They should realise that opportunity for improvement rested with the Indians themselves. Power rested very largely with the Indian Legislatures and the Ministers to deal with these matters.

As regards the actual facilities for the purchase of improved agricultural machinery by the ryot, it would be wholly unconstitutional for the Secretary of State to interfere in the administration of Agricultural Departments in the provinces, as this was the Transferred Subject. Mr. Johnston's suggestion had already been passed on to the Government of India, in case they might think it is desirable to transmit it to the Provincial Governments for the moment, or further action was possible on the part of the Secretary of State.

Earl Winterton gave a friendly warning to Mr. Johnston that Mr. Johnston's activities were likely to be seriously misconstrued in India as an endeavour to exploit the peasant for the benefit of the British manufacturer, and workman. Earl Winterton had seen entirely unfounded suggestion to this effect in the Indian Press.

Referring to the industrial unrest, he said that there was no doubt that the strikes had been engineered by the experienced agitators, and cited as an instance the strike at Tata's. He agreed that it was most desirable that Trade-Unionism should be on a better basis.

As regards the action of the Police, he said that while unfortunately disturbances had resulted from the strikes and occasionally it had been necessary for the Police to fire a few rounds in self-protection from the rioters and to restore order, there had been remarkably a few of these episodes and the Police had shown restraint and devotion to duty as great as ever shown by the Police force in this country. Meanwhile, the existence and challenge of the Communist agitators would in no way deflect the Government's policy of remedial measures and improving the lot of the workers.

Earl Winterton regretted that an answer made by Mr. Purcell to the charges brought by Mr. Saklatvala had not occurred earlier in the evening, because it would have created a sensation outside the House, but he hoped that it would meet the eyes of some people in India.

Dealing with the strikers in regard to which he said, that there had been several arrests of Communists whose action was about to come before the Courts.

Earl Winterton declared that, if necessary, the Government would not hesitate to take further action with a view to checking agitation which had such serious consequences.

# Agra Provincial Hindu Conference.

The following instructive address was delivered by Lala Lagpat Rai at Etawah on the 27th October 1928:—

I do not propose to make a lengthy speech, but the fact that the country is in the throes of a political crisis, compels me to devote a large part of my address to the political issues that confront the nation at the present moment.

I once said that "The Hindus have no political aims of their own, separate from those of their countrymen of other faiths. It must be understood that no living nation can avoid politics. Politics is the very breath of associated life and political activities of a healthy kind are absolutely necessary for social progress and national prosperity."

Political activities are of two kinds—anti-Government and pro-Government. The Hindus have so far followed a National policy and, I think, they must stick to that. They will be stultifying themselves if they replace their nationalism by communalism.

So far as politics are concerned, the Hindu Maha Sabha has no special political functions except to define the position of the community in relation to other communities. The Hindus as a community are opposed to communal representation as such in any shape or form.

That communal representation was a negation of Nationalism and it was practically dividing the country into watertight compartments. If the principle of communal representation was extended it was not known how many divisions and sub-divisions might be created. This question should be considered, not in the interests of the Hindu or the Mohammedan community, but of one united nation which should stand against those who do not want to give us self-Government. If any solution is put forward which will further our country's progress I shall whole-heartedly support it. But remember we have not only to win our liberty but also to keep it."

My position has been consistently the same during all these years

## Nehru Report.

Continuing, Lalaji said in reference to the Nehru Report:—

Personally I consider this arrangement to be satisfactory. So far, I have not read any expressions of dissatisfaction with it anywhere in the Hindu Press. With one or two exceptions the whole Hindu Press of the Punjab is in favour of the report and so is the Hindu Press of the rest of India. The Hindus of the province of Agra, I presume, can have no objection to the Nehru Committee recommendations. On the contrary they have every reason to be satisfied with the same. And so have the Muslims too. The principles of the Nehru Report are the only principles on which a democratic constitution for India is possible to be framed at present. It provides ample guarantees for minorities. It adequately safeguards the interests of their religion and culture and it secures to them a substantial voice and share in the political and economic activities of the nation.

But many Moslems are objecting and these objections are of two kinds:—

(1) Those purely of a communal nature. In this class are included:—

(a) The demand for reservation of seats for Muslim minorities and majorities all over India, not for ten years but for all time to come until the Muslims themselves choose to dispense with it.

(b) The demand for the continuation of separate electorates.

(c) The demand for over-weightage in provinces as well central legislature.

(d) The extension of communal representation to local bodies, services, universities and all other elected bodies.

(2) Those relating to the powers of the central and the provincial legislatures and the fundamental nature of the constitution.

In meeting the objections, Lalaji said :—

In the matter of communal representation the Hindus have accepted the recommendations of the report as the maximum of what they can swallow. They shall not be a party to any tampering with the same. The retention of separate electorates is altogether out of the question. Any specific over-weightages to Muslim minorities except in the shape sanctioned, either in the provincial or in the central legislature shall not be agreed to. The demand for extension of communal representation to Services, Universities or Local Bodies or in any other respect is simply preposterous and no constitution containing a provision to that effect has any chance of being accepted or approved of by any section of the Hindus. The Hindu opinion on these points is so strong, that I think I may venture to say that any attempt to make any changes in these respects will not only be stoutly opposed but will be construed as an attempt to back out of the position accepted at Lucknow.

Reservation for majorities is a demand opposed to all principles of democracy and they cannot agree to it, but election by the method of proportional representation is a principle which they should have no objection to reconsider if pressed by our Muslim or Sikh countrymen. This is all what I want to say about communal representation at this stage.

Coming to the other fundamental objection to the nature of government recommended by the Report, I would like to point out that India is a country the like of which is not to be found anywhere else in the world. Analogies based on the constitutions of other countries cannot be accepted without reservations and modifications. I repeat what I said at Lucknow. In my judgment all controversy as to whether the form of Government in India should be Federal or Unilateral is futile. Let us not be slaves of words. Let us profit by the example and experience of others, but let us decide what is best for us under the peculiar circumstances of our own country.

After exploding the arguments of Sir M. Shafi and Aga Khan, Lalaji added :—

I want to make it clear that this is the most fundamental basis of the structure designed by the Nehru Report, and any tinkering with it at the bidding of H. H. the Aga Khan or Sir Shafi will mean wrecking it almost wholly. I will not speak for others, but speaking for myself, I will be no party to it. For the present I will let the matter rest here. I am whole-heartedly in favour of the Report as it is, and I would advise the Hindus all over India to accept and support it in a spirit of genuine patriotism mixed with a certain element of sportsmanship. There are risks involved in the scheme both to Hindus and Muslims. I will not discuss them. On the whole, the scheme is the fairest and soundest possible solution of our problem, conditioned and circumstanced as we are. It can be improved upon in details, but the moment you touch any of the cornerstones, that moment it falls to the ground like a pack of cards.

Simon Boycott.

Now as to the Simon Commission. Events have justified the boycott which my humble self inaugurated in the Legislative Assembly when proposing my resolution on the subject. Even then I could visualise the scenes that are being enacted at Poona. The whole scheme of the Commission is dominated by one motive to see how ridiculously and childishly absurd and unfit for Self-Government the Indian people are. It has brought into prominence, as it was designed to do, men who are intensely communalistic and entirely devoid of any faculty of constructive politics. What is happening at Poona? Reactionary Muslims, the supposed representatives of depressed classes, the Anglo-Indians and the Europeans are having the best time of their lives. They are vying with one another in exposing the weakest points of the Indian polity, points which have been sharpened and brought into prominent relief by the active policy of the British Government. What was achieved during the last ten years by an active policy of "divide and rule" is now publicly brought into evidence in order to make India the laughing stock of the world. Our own men are the ready tools. They are playing into the hands of the enemy.

## Social Problems.

Continuing Lalaji said :—

I will now turn to the social side of the Hindu problem, which in my judgment is the real outstanding problem before the Hindus. If the Hindus could put their house in order socially, they need entertain no fear of any aggression against them from any quarter. The first thing which I would like the Hindus to realise is the open attempt that is being made both by the British and some sections of the Muslims to exploit the prevailing caste system for political purposes. H. H. the Aga Khan wants every caste to be separately represented in the Legislature. Sir Mohammad Shafi wants the depressed classes to be separated from the Hindus. He says they are not Hindus and should not be considered as such for political purposes. The general trend of bureaucratic policy also is towards the same direction. There are some persons among the depressed classes themselves, who are either the hired agents of the one of the other or under their influence, who are spreading the same views among these classes themselves. Again there are some foolish Hindus as well who are consciously or unconsciously playing into the hands of the enemies by supporting "Adi-Hindu movement" and the political claims of the latter. Some of them think that by doing so they would spur on the Hindus to remove the religious and social disabilities of the depressed classes and concede to them what is their right. I must frankly tell you that the present caste system, as it prevails to day, is the greatest danger to Hinduism as a religion and to the Hindu community as a community. I won't discuss the origin, nor rights and wrongs of the system in the days when the Hindus alone lived in this country. It may have had its use in the past, but under modern conditions and to day it is an anachronism of the worst type. It is an effective bar to "Sangathan." It is the negation of organised Hindu life.

## Physical Condition.

Next in importance comes the physical condition of the community. Let me assure you with all the emphasis that I can put on the matter that the greatest need of the Hindu community next to its organization on national lines is the improvement of its physical condition. A physically helpless community is at the mercy of every body. Physical disabilities sap vitality and make the person suffering therefrom unfit for the battle of life. They expose you to the ridicule and contempt of others. They are a handicap to all efforts intellectual moral or political. Physical training of young people is good and useful; exercise by all is a necessity; clean and sanitary houses and clean and good food will go a great way to improve health.

But unless and until you change and reform your marriage laws the curse of heredity will not let you reap the full benefit of all those efforts. A human being must be well born in order to make his subsequent efforts for a good and healthy life bear proper fruit. The child of a weak, emaciated, tender mother starts life with a handicap, which accompanies him everywhere in all his activities and hampers his full growth as a man or woman. It is a matter of joy that the Hindus all over the country are now alive to the importance of the question, but this awakening has not yet assumed such proportions as would assure early steps being taken to reform the whole system. The whole system requires an immediate overhauling. Infant marriage is an abominable thing contrary to all sense of decency and responsibility. But even early marriage is extremely detrimental to the individual as well as the race.

It is equally important that marriages of disproportionately unequals in ages be stopped; that choice of parties to the marriage be freer and more unhampered by custom; that the custom of demanding and giving large dowries be discontinued; and that all pecuniary considerations should be eliminated from contracts of marriage. In my judgment it is equally important that the marriages of widows, virgin or young, be encouraged or at least all obstacles in the way be removed.

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# The Indian National Congress.

*OPENING DAY—29th DECEMBER 1928.*

The 43rd. session of the Indian National Congress which commenced in Calcutta on the 29th DECEMBER 1928 was one of the most momentous that had been held in the political annals of the country. Among the sessions of the Congress in the past the gatherings which assembled at Surat in 1907, at Lucknow in 1916, at Amritsar in 1919 and at Calcutta at a special session in 1920 form landmarks in the progress of the national movement. While the Lucknow and Amritsar sessions had achieved a measure of communal and political unity that had hung anxiously in the balance in the months previous thereto, the Surat and the Calcutta special sessions registered the expression of a new life in the national struggle. The importance of the present session in Calcutta arises from the combination of both these vital factors in the affairs of the Congress and other political organisations. The Calcutta Congress met at a most critical juncture when, for the first time, a great and far-reaching attempt had been made, by summoning a National Convention, to bring the various political, commercial and other organisations in the country on a common platform. The delegates were welcomed to the great and beautiful City by Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta, the trusted lieutenant of DESABANDHU CHITTARANJAN DAS and the leader of the Committee, in the course of a remarkably frank and forceful address, subjects the fruits of co-operation with the British Government on the part of the Indian people to a close and searching analysis and comes to the conclusion, inevitable to those who approach the problem in a dispassionate spirit that the result has been absolutely nil. In the economic, the political and in fact in every other field of public activity cooperation has brought about no gain worth mentioning. Mr. Sen Gupta, after referring to the policy of industrial subjugation of the country and the disastrous currency manipulations effected by the Government, deals at considerable length with the Railway policy of the Government, a question not usually dealt with on the Congress platform of recent years. With all his passionate patriotism Mr. Sen Gupta is a man of action who does not overlook the practical necessities of the hour. Speaking about the controversy regarding Independence versus Dominion Status, he asked the delegates not to be carried away by mere political theories in the abstract but set themselves to the task of ascertaining how best they might promote national self-assertion which was the one and only way of achieving the great object before the Congress. The supreme test by which the question of Independence versus Dominion Status had to be judged was whether they were prepared to say that, in view of the overwhelming need for conjoint action in the country, a constitution based upon Independence would produce the same unity as that which has resulted from the labours of the Nehru Committee. Mr. Sen Gupta is only too conscious of the defects in the national organisation which stand in the way of a radical transformation of national life. These deficiencies are mainly social and he makes an impassioned appeal for a social revolution which would remove these encrustations from the past and make Indians better fitted to carry on the national struggle free from those besetting evils and able to bear the responsibilities of Swaraj.

The guidance of the ship of the Congress at this critical turn in the fortunes of the country has been entrusted to that tried helmsman, Pandit Motilal Nehru. Nine years ago he presided at the Amritsar Congress when a wave of indignation was passing over the country over the Amritsar massacre. That he has been again asked to take charge of the Congress especially at a time when marked differences divide the counsels of the nation, testifies to the complete confidence felt in his leadership. The address which he delivered as President is typical

of the characteristics which have made him the trusted leader of the popular movement who has alike won the confidence of other political and public bodies in this country by his able and consummate, yet withal, honourable and straight conduct in the direction of national affairs. He has won the respect and admiration of his political opponents in an uncommon measure. His pronouncement is, as he himself has said, a matter of fact and businesslike one, withal displaying the earnestness of the patriot determined to win freedom for his country, and exhibiting a natural anxiety to consolidate the national forces and enable them to function together. He propounds three questions: "Where do we stand?" "What is our destination?" and "How should we achieve it?" After a remarkably clear and succinct analysis of the political situation, brought about by a series of broken promises and pledges ending with the progress of the Simon Commission showing 'the presence of the toxin of Dyerism in the Government's internal economy,' as he put it, the Pandit pauses to review the story of the extinction of Indian manufactures, and of the currency policy and arrives at the conclusion that owing to two sets of disabilities, one from without and another from within, the nation is being handicapped and that only after breaking through these shackles can it hope to be really free. Like Mr. Sen Gupta Panditji lays stress on the social evils which obstruct our path to national freedom which is our destination and which can only be won by beginning at the point at which the All-Parties Convention has now arrived and then pushing forward with it in order to reach the final goal. He believes that Dominion Status involves a very considerable amount of freedom bordering on Independence. He thinks that there was no harm in making an offer to the British Government, and he recalled how the late Desabandhu Das had made a similar offer of co-operation at Faridpur. The Nehru Report was such a gesture. He urges that we ought to take account of the facts of the situation without merely losing ourselves in theories and dogmas and by a supreme effort to cleanse ourselves to acquire the ability for Independence. He is himself a complete Independent; but he is not against Dominion Status and he has appealed for support for that national unity which he and his coadjutors in the All-Parties Conference have sought to achieve with such remarkable success. In doing so, he has, as may be expected, made a frank and clear statement of his position and left the Congress in no uncertainty as to his own views. In emphasising the importance of the All-Parties Conference he points out :

"This is the first time in the history of the Congress that it invited the people of India through the various organisations representing them, to determine for themselves what is good for them. In doing so the Congress has acted on the principle of self-determination. Those invited have accepted the invitation of the Congress as they never did before—no, not even in the palmy days of Non-co-operation—when, with all the millions behind it, the Congress was not supported by many well-known organisations. There is not one organisation—political, social, religious, communal, industrial or labour—of any note or standing to-day which did not take part in the All-Parties' Conferences and the National Convention or which, having so taken part, has not given up much that it valued for the sake of unity. It is an achievement of which any country in the world might well be proud. That achievement will now be presented to you. Will you accept it or spurn it? If you have any faith in your claim for self-determination, you have no right to spurn it even if you disagree. The only question is, whether there is such a consensus of agreement on the scheme that it can be treated as self-determined. I say there is. The only dissentients are a few communalists. I must say frankly that I do not understand them and am unable to reconcile their claim for special communal advantages with their desire for complete Independence. Some of these would reserve to a handful the right to arrest the whole course of the country's legislation. Others are prepared to go back even on joint electorates if a few additional seats are not given to them in the legislatures. Their dissent with a system of Dominion Status can hardly be taken seriously".

While he is in full sympathy with the desire for full national Independence for his country he points out how Independence and Dominion Status are entirely



reconcilable and, what is more important, the programme of work for achieving either is the same for all Congressmen, nay, for all Indians. He has left the Government in no doubt as to the advancing tide of resentment in the country at recent developments culminating in the brutal and callous manner in which the authorities behaved in Lucknow, Lahore and other places. The Pandit further warned the Government that the threats of repression and resolute government could only strengthen its determination to offer firm and peaceful resistance to all such measures with calm courage and resolve, especially on the part of the younger generation." vide Hindu, Madras.

### THE WELCOME ADDRESS.

The Congress met punctually at 2 P. M. on the 29th DECEMBER. After the singing of the National Anthem Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta, Chairman of the Reception Committee, delivered his address in welcoming the delegates to the Congress. The following is the text of his speech :—

Brother and Sister Delegates, Ladies and gentlemen,—This is the ninth time that the Indian National Congress is holding its session in Calcutta and the first time since that memorable Special Session of Sept. 1920, when it accepted the programme of Non-co-operation placed before the country by that great and good man M. K. Gandhi. On behalf of the Reception Committee and the people of Bengal, I have the honour to extend to you a most hearty welcome to this city. Our shortcomings are many, but I beg of you to remember our difficulties. The Congress is not what it used to be before 1920. In magnitude and in importance it is not to be compared to the older Congress. To-day the Congress embraces not only the intelligentsia but includes within its orbit the masses as well as the classes. It is no more a bourgeois organisation. Its message has reached the remotest corners of the country. To-day the illiterate but intelligent Indian of the village who has never set his eyes on a city is anxious to know what the Congress is doing, what it expects him to do, and is ever ready to carry out its behests. Where formerly the Reception Committee had to look after a few hundreds, now they have to minister to the needs of many thousands. In point of fact, the members of a present Reception Committee find themselves faced with problems akin to those of a city. Not only have they to play the host to the delegates of the Congress, but they have to make arrangements for the hundreds of thousands who find their way into the enclosure during the week. It is therefore more than likely that our arrangements would suffer from many deficiencies, and for a proper discharge of our duties we shall have to depend on your indulgence to overlook our shortcomings rather than on our ability to remove them. I must mention here that whatever success the Reception Committee may have achieved is due in a great measure to the zeal and enthusiasm and untiring efforts of those patriotic victims of a lawless law—the political prisoners—who have recently come out from their prison cells. Some of the political prisoners lost their lives while others are still in prison. I shall not express any sorrow for them. They are above sorrow. We offer their sacrificial soul as a burnt offering to the altar of the Almighty.

THE LATE HAKIM AJMAL KHAN AND LALA LAJPAT RAI.

Friends, hardly had we dispersed from the annual session of the Indian National Congress held at Madras last year than the hand of death took away from us the great Hindu-Moslem leader, Hakim Ajmal Khan. An eminent physician, an ardent patriot and a far-sighted statesman of great judgment, he was a unifying force in the country. He was one of the few men in India who kept a cool head and gave a correct lead during the troublous days of Hindu-Moslem disturbances in 1926. Though he was in failing health he never lost his thorough grasp of the Indian situation and his healing hand was ever ready to serve the country in every difficulty.

Friends, as we were in the midst of the preparations of this momentous session and both Lala Lajpat Rai and we were looking forward to his presence and active participation in this Congress and the National Convention he also was

snatched away from us. His was a life of persecutions, prosecutions and deportation at the hands of the Government from which he felt it was his duty to deliver his country. He was a Congressman through and through and his life gives the lie direct to the charge that Congressmen have no concern with the masses of the people, that Congressmen do not take an interest in the depressed classes, that Congressmen are recruited only from the Brahmin and upper classes and that they mean by Swaraj the rule of a highcaste oligarchy. Lajpat Rai's whole career was one long train of labours and sacrifices for the depressed classes. His activities in connection with the Arya Samaj and the Servants of People Society will go down to posterity as monuments of his greatness. But friends, although he was so great, so honoured by his countrymen ; although in any free country he would have easily attained the highest position in the councils of the realm, we have to confess it and hang down our heads in shame, that he, even he could not escape the deliberate insult and assault of a paid servant of the Government. Indians are convinced that even if the assault was not the only cause of his death it did hasten it. Perhaps Providence in his inscrutable way wanted to remind us, through this humiliation of our leader, of the humiliating position of the whole nation and of our utter helplessness and thus to inspire us to sink all our differences and put forth our best efforts for the purpose of destroying once for all a state of things which makes it possible for a foreign government and their agents to insult, imprison, assault to deport without trial the greatest, the noblest and the most illustrious of our men.

#### OUR GOAL AND THE NEHRU REPORT.

How can we do that ? How can we put an end to that state of affairs ? There is only one way—mobilisation of all the scattered forces of the nation, their concentration at one point. For united action a common platform, a single rallying point is necessary. We have got such a rallying point in what is known as the Nehru Report which has just been considered in the National Convention and has come out with certain modifications for the consideration of the Congress.

I look upon this document not as a begging bowl for Dominion Status but as a weapon in our fight for full independence. A supreme embodiment of the labours of some of our most prominent leaders, it is an instrument of unity. Its chief merit, in my humble opinion, lies in the fact that, so far as it is possible to judge, it provides a centre of unity for the various political forces that are agitating our country to-day. The strength of a draft constitution is to be measured primarily, I think, by the amount of support it is able to marshal behind itself. Judged from this point of view there is no proposal before the country which can challenge comparison with the Nehru Report.

A very serious question has been raised whether the adoption of the constitution advanced by the Nehru Committee interferes with our endeavour after the attainment of full independence. I do not think in politics the question whether any two views are logically consistent with one another, really matters. The crucial question is whether the two interfere with each other, or, to put it differently, whether our efforts to achieve one of them hamper our efforts to achieve the other. All facts considered Dominion Status far from excluding independence as an ideal, may be used as a means in furtherance of the latter, while the deliberate repudiation of the basis on which the Nehru Report has been grounded may scatter the various elements which it has brought together. I say, take your stand on this unity which has been produced by the Nehru Report and do not, in view of the present political situation, take the risk of destroying it, in the hope that after lapse of some time the ideal of independence would produce a similar and perhaps a more powerful unity. Take the report, the whole of it, as a pragmatist and not as a philosopher, or a logician or a student of political theories in the abstract. Are you prepared to say that a constitution based on independence will produce the same unity to-day among the political forces operating in India as this document has done ? If not, spare it.

## RESISTANCE OR CO-OPERATION ?

The next question is, how shall the vantage ground, the unity afforded by the Nehru Committee's Report, be utilised in furtherance of our cause? How are we to get the maximum result out of the solidarity evolved out of this agreement about our immediate objective? What will be the propelling motive of this tremendous force? Shall it be used to force the hands of the Government or be united in co-operation with them as we are being invited?

In his speech at St. Andrew's Dinner on Nov. 30th, Sir Stanley Jackson held out Dominion Status as a reward for co-operation. "The policy of progressive realisation of responsible Government in British India," he said, "has been determined by Parliament. The application must be gradual. The pace of its adoption must depend upon that demonstration of good-will and desire for that co-operation which is a necessary preliminary for that partnership which Dominion Status implies." The Viceroy also spoke in the same strain to the Calcutta European Association. While the Viceroy and the Governor of Bengal speak of realisation of Dominion Status as being the determined goal of India, see what Sir Michael O'Dwyer, ex-satrap of the Punjab, says on this point. In an article in the October issue of "India" he thus unburdens himself: "The Reforms Act of 1919 said nothing about Dominion Status, it contemplated British India, even if she attained self government, remaining *an integral part of the British Empire*. Later on for want of a better analogy, that of Dominion Status was talked of in a slipshod way."

Whatever else he is, Sir Michael is a plain-spoken man who knows no hypocrisy, and, in the interpretation of the diplomatic phraseology of Whitehall, is a truer guide than the subtle ex-whip of the Conservative party. According to Sir Michael, Their Excellencies talked of Dominion Status in a slipshod manner. The Declaration of 1927 as well as the British Parliament never meant "Dominion Status," when they used the term "Responsible Government" as the accepted goal of India. I would not attempt to assess the constitutional value of Sir Michael's interpretation. For, whatever its legal worth, it is an exact representation of the inner mind of British policy in India. In plain language, Britain does not mean what she says.

## CO-OPERATION IN EXCELSIS.

Friends, if England was sincere, if cooperation was really meant to be rewarded with Dominion Status, India has already earned it. There can be no question of its gradual realisation. The policy of co-operation has been overdone. No honest man can even conceive of a greater degree of co-operation than what India has accorded to Britain. India co-operated with Britain in establishing British Empire in India. It was the Indian Sepoy and the Indian taxpayer that turned John Company from a toader into a ruler. They it was who extended British possessions in Asia and planted the Union Jack in Africa. Then again when in 1857, breach of faith with Indian princes and bungling with the army shook British Power in India to its very foundations, it was Indian cooperation that saved them from sailing away bag and baggage towards the Cape of Good Hope. British historians have written volumes on the Mutiny of Indian soldiers but the mutiny of British soldiers has been allowed to be forgotten. Could British power in India be maintained even for a day but for the loyalty and co-operation of the Indian Army when British soldiers mutinied to enforce their demand for higher pay? The Sepoy Mutiny was a mutiny of a small section of the Indian Army and was confined to a limited area. The greater part of the army not only remained loyal but carried loyalty to a degree unparalleled in the history of the world. They not only fought shoulder to shoulder with British soldiers but when provisions fell short proposed to live and actually lived, on boiled rice water giving the solid food to their white comrades. Could good-will and co-operation go further? Is the like of it to be found in the history of the Dominions in spite of the "community of blood" mentioned by Sir Michael O'Dwyer? What the Indian soldiers did in 1857 has been done by the whole Indian nation ever since. Indians

as a nation have allowed themselves to be starved so that Britishers might not feel the pinch of hunger. India has paid England's debt unjustly piled upon her head ; she has paid vast sums as tribute, has purchased British stores much in excess of her real requirements to find employment for British labour and British capital ; she has patiently suffered her fiscal and currency policy to be manipulated to develop British industries at the expense of her own. And all this while famines have been carrying away millions every year and leaving hungry and emaciated many millions more. During the great European War when not only the British Empire but the independent existence of Britain herself was hanging in the balance, India rose as one man and hastened to her rescue. Neither men nor money were grudged. The Indian National Congress resolved to stand by the Empire "at all hazards and at all costs." The Extremists vied with the Moderates in raising recruits and war contributions. Leaders of the national movement headed by Lokamanya Tilak and Mahatma Gandhi showed a zeal that might be an example to the Army Head-quarters. The Imperial Legislative Council voted a free gift of 150 crores followed by a second gift of 45 crores. In addition to this, India spent about 300 crores on behalf of the War Office, the Dominion and the Allied Governments. Over and above this she supplied a huge quantity of food stuffs and other war materials but did not insist on payment in specie—the reserve in the Currency Department to cover the notes issued to finance these purchases being ultimately nothing but the I. O. U's. of the Allied Governments. The Army, the Marine and the Railway materials of India were placed at the absolute disposal of Britain.

There was an opportunity before India to develop her industries. But instead of availing herself of that opportunity she imposed upon herself a law, whereby in order to ensure the success of the War loans, restrictions were placed on the floatation of new Joint Stock Companies. Could there be a greater self-denying ordinance ? In the beginning of the war if Indian soldiers did not raise with their body a wall of living tissues, Joffre could not have found time necessary to organise the resources of France and in that case the map of Europe would have been different from what it is now. India with her children's blood and money secured for Britain extensive territories in Mesopotamia and East Africa.

Friends, we have co-operated with Britain: we have shown her good-will. In doing that we have destroyed our industries, our mercantile marine, debased our currency and piled on our shoulders a heavy interest charge. We have shed our blood, and starved our children. We have conquered for her vast territories. We have sent our men and women to develop Britain's overseas plantations to be kicked out as soon as their development was complete. By submitting to inhuman emigration and coolie recruiting laws we have co-operated, cooperated shamefully. If in these Britain sees good-will fit for appreciation other nations see in them incredible stupidity and utter lack of self-respect. I ask my co-operating countrymen, what do they mean by co-operation—what are its limits and have not they been already over-stepped ?

#### BRITAIN NEVER CO-OPERATES.

British people do not understand co-operation. They understand force only. Not only India but other countries also have not got justice from Britain by co-operation. It is only when justice is backed by force that Britain recognises it as such. America had justice on her side when she demanded the abolition of the tea-duty. Did Britain pay any heed when petition after petition was sent to Parliament by co-operating America ? No. Realising the futility of co-operation, which meant never-ending acquiescence in taxation without representation, America asserted herself and by methods better appreciated by Britain got more than her original demand, and the United States were lost to the British Empire. Turkey co-operated with Britain as a trusted ally. Did that save her from losing Egypt or Cyprus ? Could she disentangle herself from the meshes of the Capitulations until the military strength of Kamal Pasha, aided by force of circumstances, brought about their abrogation ?

Britain's relations with the dominions tell the same tale. In South Africa the Boers were unjustly deprived of their freedom when they were weak. It was defeat in war that compelled England under Gladstone to recognise them again as a free nation. It is often said that Britain under the leadership of Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman after the second Boer War in 1898 showed unprecedented magnanimity to a fallen foe by granting self-government to South Africa. But is that the fact? The Boers were already an independent nation—they did not require any self-government. It was the disfranchised Uitlanders, that is, Britishers in the Transvaal, who were in need of it and sought Britain's intervention to back up their claim. The last Boer War was fought on that issue and though the Boers were compelled to enfranchise the Uitlanders, the British could not inflict on them a defeat sufficiently crushing to be able to impose on them the disabilities of a subject nation. At least there was the fear of recrudescence of another upheaval. How did Canada get self-government? Canada was on the verge of rebellion. And though Lord Durham succeeded in restoring order temporarily there was apprehension of another outbreak and amalgamation with the United States.

British policy in China has no more justification than what may be claimed by smugglers and pirates. For it was by supporting, first a smuggler and then a pirate, that Britain got a footing in China. And it is not sense of justice and fair play, but the power of the Nanking Government that has compelled Britain to slacken her grip in China. How did Afghanistan wrest her freedom from the incubus of a British Resident? What is a gift from Britain? It was the broad sword that in 1919 turned Amir Amanulla into His Majesty King Amanulla of Independent Afghanistan. Britain had established a virtual protectorate in Mohammarah, in spite of, or shall I say, because of, the co-operation of the Persian Court. It was the long and powerful arm of Reza Khan Pehlavi that restored Persian supremacy in Mohammarah. During the Great War Arabia co-operated with Britain against Turkey on the distinct understanding that she would be recognised as a free country. But was that promise fulfilled? What has Britain to answer to the indictment made by Lawrence who was instrumental in bringing about the revolt of the Arabs against their Turkish masters?

The history of Ireland proves to the hilt the futility of co-operation in obtaining justice from Britain. Ireland was exploited; Ireland was oppressed. Groaning under the Church and the Government imposed by Britain, victimised by tithe acts and iniquitous land-laws, the Irish people cried for justice—cried themselves hoarse for more than half a century. What was the result? Daniel O'Connell's movement for the repeal of the Act of Union was answered by coercive measures. Parnell pinned his faith on constitutional agitation and constitutional remedies. An idealist prime minister was persuaded of the justice of his case. But the more matter-of-fact Parliament refused to do justice merely because it was justice. The Home Rule Bills of Gladstone failed to enlist their support. The Home Rule League went on agitating for quarter of a century and was answered with a policy of alternate coercion and conciliation according to the varying strength of the movement, until the Sinn Feiners appeared on the scene and compelled Britain to recognise Ireland as a Free State. Throughout history, not a single instance can be cited when Britain has dealt fairly with weaker nations. John Bright declared in tones of melancholy conviction that the House of Commons had done many things which were just but never anything merely because it was just. Britain would deviate into an act of justice only when her own interests lie in that direction. If a choice has to be made between justice and her own national interest, Britain would be just only under compulsion and not otherwise. Co-operation and good-will on the part of the weaker nations have not only not succeeded in evoking a like sentiment in Britain but have produced opposite results. Like all bullies she has regarded them as signs of weakness—to be seized upon and exploited with impunity to further her own selfish ends. After what I have said and shown from history, what substance is there in the Viceroy's threat that refusal to co-operate would alienate the sympathy of Britain? Evidently His Excellency

is under a double delusion that Britain would do justice through conviction without compulsion and that India has not yet got out of trance, that her salvation lies in cultivating the good opinion of the British people.

#### BRITAIN'S RESPONSE TO INDIA'S CO-OPERATION.

I have pointed out before that India has been showing goodwill to England and co-operating with her patiently from the beginning of the British rule. What is the net result? Instead of progressing we have receded farther and farther. Our faith has been rewarded by suspicion and our goodwill by contempt. Our co-operation has been smelted for forging our own fetters and erecting our own gallows.

India has ever stood by Britain in fighting her enemies. She has believed in her professions, in her *bona fides*, so much so, that with the older generation of Indian leaders anything bad, petty or unjust was "Un-British". Our language was made the vehicle of thoughts and sentiments which will be denounced as unworthy of man everywhere on the face of the earth. Dadabhai Naoroji christened his book on British misrule as "Un-British Rule in India." When a European killed an Indian and escaped scot-free; when a peaceful meeting was fired upon or dispersed with the help of regulation lathies; when innocent citizens were deprived of their liberty without trial, the press and the platform called for redress in the name of "British justice." This faith in Britain's goodwill—how was it reciprocated? It was reciprocated by a policy of distrust and suspicion. The peculiar regimental formation of the Indian Army, the exclusion of Indian soldiers from the artillery, the air-force and from garrison duty, what do all these things indicate? The co-operating tribe of Umar Hyat Khan's notwithstanding, Britain distrusts us and so cannot have a regiment of Indian soldiers without a corresponding percentage of Europeans as a balancing factor. It is this distrust that has made her follow a policy of disarming the whole nation. In order to make her grip tighter she has further weakened the people by dividing them artificially into martial and non-martial classes. By this policy, except a limited area, the entire country has been rendered unfit for the growth of a virile population. And be it noted that this policy of recruitment from among Indians and their neighbours has systematically shifted from the more progressive to the less and less progressive. Thus the Sepoys of the old Bengal and Madras army came to be replaced by the Sikhs and the Rajputs, the latter again by the Pathans, and for the last thirty years, the Gurkhas of Nepal have become the chief source, and I suppose, if the British people are able to plant their broad heel deep enough into the soil of Mesopotamia, the Pathan garrison in the Fort William of Bengal will be in time replaced by the Iraqis.

#### BRITAIN IN HER ROLE OF TRUSTEE.

As self-interest, pure and simple, has been throughout the key-note of Britain's military policy, so it has been of her industrial policy. The paternal British Bureaucracy trumpet themselves as the friends of the masses and pretend to defend them against their educated countrymen, against their own ignorant selves. But look how they have discharged their duties as the trustees of the Indian people, the dumb millions as they are called.

India was a prosperous country before the British captured the reins of her government. Her trade and industry and agriculture were in a flourishing condition—she had a big mercantile marine—she had an excellent system of primary as well as higher education—a wonderful system of irrigation and an unobstructed drainage system. The people were healthy and free from the ravages of malaria, kala-azar and other preventable diseases. All this changed soon after John Company became master of India and began their dual function of commerce and governance—trading like rulers and ruling like traders. It seemed as if the magic lamp of a malignant Aladdin played its trick on a garden city, turning in a trice its garden into desert. Let us see how this was done. How has this metamorphosis come about? The prosperity of a country depends on the prosperity of its industries. And the industries of India were broad-based and secure behind impregnable

fortifications. The country had a vast fund of accumulated capital which flowed through a well-devised system of indigenous banking, nurtured her diverse industries and financed the movements of their products. There was an unlimited fount of skill and enterprise of a very high degree—the result of accumulated experience of ages. The possession of an efficient mercantile marine gave the children of the soil a strong, strategic position in regard to markets, internal as well as international. To all these were added the invaluable advantage of having an abundant supply of raw materials near at hand. Under these circumstances it was not easy to destroy the industries of India. Indeed, it could never be done by honest competition. Britain realised that, and bringing to her aid the political power acquired by John Company applied herself assiduously to destroy the Indian industries and build out of their ashes, her own industrial greatness. The stages by which it was done look like a carefully laid out plan, killing foe after foe, espousing the immediate interests of the one when striking the other and then turning to the second when the first had been felled. The first blow was dealt at the mercantile marine. To-day, it sounds strange to the ear of the man in the street that pre-British India was a great naval power. But as a matter of fact there was a considerable fleet along the country's extensive coast line when the East India Company became master of India. They were destroyed by restrictions on their use and movements. Indians were forbidden to take part in foreign and afterwards in inter-provincial trade. On the one hand, Indian goods had to be re-exported to other continental countries. On the other hand, vessels employing Indian sailors were forbidden entry into British ports. Thus, by mere strokes of the pen a flourishing industry employing a large body of labour was ruined and the valuable ocean transport trade passed away from the hands of the Indians. When the destruction of India's mercantile marine and the expulsion of her children from foreign commerce were complete and their place was securely occupied by British merchants and British carriers, the industries of India lost their first line of defence. India still manufactured but the trade came to be concentrated in the hands of the East India Company who made of London a great centre of entrepot trade in Indian goods. The result was that by regulating the rate of her profit and other charges she could raise something like a tariff wall against Indian goods in all other countries. The guillotine was ready for the next victim. An aggressive policy against the industries of India followed, and excise duty in India and increased custom duty and even total prohibition in England reinforced by free import of British goods into India, differential railway rates and currency manipulations crushed them out of existence. Protection has been resorted to by national governments to enable indigenous industries to capture home markets. But nowhere has political power been roused to devise such a Machiavellian instrument of handicapping a country's industry. This was the way that our industries were killed and millions of labourers were thrown out of employment by a parental government. This was how the chartered brigands and libertines who called themselves the East India Company discharged their duties as trustees of the dumb millions.

Has there been a change in the spirit since the British Crown made itself directly responsible for the government of this country? Has the leopard changed its spots? Now as ever all their policies, all their actions are directed towards one aim, viz., exploitation of India for the benefit of England. India is burdened with an ever-swelling military expenditure so that the Army bill of England may be reduced. She is compelled to maintain a costly white personnel in all branches of her public services though an equally efficient indigenous agency is available at a much lower cost, in order to provide employment for Britain's educated labour. The public works of India are used as dumping ground for British manufactures, the policy underlying the purchase of stores being neither to encourage Indian industries nor to buy in the lowest market. The tariff, currency and loan policies of the country are directed towards the same end—stimulation of British industries and suppression of those of her own. I shall content myself here with setting out in some detail one instance of Britain's programme of systematic exploitation or shall I say burglary.

While anxiety for the preservation of Britain's Empire was the one pre-occupation of India during the war when India ran to her rescue and stood by her at all costs and at all hazards, Britain was engaged in the honourable business of devising ways and means as to how best to pick her pocket. She was following a currency policy which for unabashed selfishness and treachery has no parallel in history. And to achieve this end she had an instrument ready in the system of currency known as the Gold Exchange Standard. Through its instrumentality the vast war profits of India were intercepted and made to accumulate in England. India's gold accumulated in London came to be looked at with wistful eyes by British financiers. The more they saw the more they were reluctant to part with it. At last they hit upon a plan of swindling India by manipulation of the exchange. To put on a hypocritical gloss on this diabolical scheme a committee of so-called experts under the chairmanship of Sir Babington Smith was appointed. Against the protest of the only Indian member, against the protest of the entire Indian nation, they raised the value of the rupee to 2 shillings. An orgy of sale of gold and gold exchange followed. Gold which was purchased at the rate of 15 rupees to the pound was sold at rates as low as Rs. 7-8 to the pound. The extent of this loss to the Government as well as the country at large has been computed at about 500 crores of rupees. As soon as this was done the Government of India decamped from the field of Exchange, and the Finance Member, Sir Malcolm Hailey, who in any other country would have been impeached and perhaps hanged, was promoted to the Governorship of a province. A correspondence between the Government of India and the Secretary of State divulged by Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas in his Note of Dissent to the report of the Currency Commission presided over by the Right Hon. Hilton Young throws a lurid light on the underhand game the Government played in raising the Exchange. It was an exhortation to screw up the value of the rupee to as high a level as was possible without breaking the back of the camel. The motive becomes evident when we read with this the Annual Report of the Senior British Trade Commissioner in India. He deplored the condition of British trade in India, how it suffered from Japanese competition and competition with Indian mills and suggested a rise in the value of the rupee to 2 shillings as a powerful aid in facing the competition. In the language of the Viceroy, "truly then could India say that her wounds were those with which she was wounded in the house of her friends"—her "real friends" and not those "false friends" who would guide her towards "the morass of independence".

#### BLESSINGS OF BRITISH RULE.

Anglo-Indians, in season and out of season, sing hymns in honour of their rule recounting its blessings. They point to the extensive railways, the magnificent ports and harbours, and the populous cities that have sprung up under the charm of British rule. They point to the increasing volume of trade that yearly passes through the ports, the favourable balance of trade, the mammoth exchange banks, the schools, colleges and hospitals. They point to all these, congratulate themselves and exclaim, "Look here, Indians, Look at these wonderful achievements. All these we have done for you." But is that the whole story? True, the achievements are wonderful. But what is that to us? Have they benefited us or have they done us more harm than good? Britain may congratulate herself on these wondrous works for they are their principal beneficiaries. To us they have done more harm than good. Most of our miseries, our poverty, our degradation, the impairment as well as the enslavement of our body and mind are attributable to them. The main purpose for which they were brought into being, was to serve British interests—and any benefit that has accrued to us is only incidental and has been far out-weighted by their injurious effects—by the fact that they were devised to serve antagonistic interests and have served that end with merciless accuracy. Look at that much-vaunted thing, the railways, the iron chains that bind India. What is their genesis? They have their root in the minute of Lord Dalhousie who urged the introduction of railways in India as a valuable military adjunct. The main railway lines have been constructed with an eye more to military requirements than to those of trade and industry. The



result is that India has been saddled with a considerable mileage of unremunerative lines. In their zeal to shorten the route, to shorten the time for mobilisation of troops, they have ignored the natural drainage of the country, and have turned vast expanses of fertile regions into water-clogged anopheles-breeding swamps—malaria scouting the country as the vanguard of the army. The system of encouraging railway construction by guaranteeing to British companies the payment of a fixed interest out of public revenues on the invested capital has involved the country in a loss of about 350 crores. The Indian railways up to the end of the last century imposed a heavy burden on the tax-payer. Afterwards by a faulty system of account-keeping they were paraded as productive enterprise, contributing substantially towards the public exchequer. But their productive character has been authoritatively challenged for want of adequate provision for depreciation out of current income. They are really an incubus on the Indian tax-payer. Their expansion has often responded to the requirements of British capital seeking investing outlet and British engineering industries seeking market and employment. This is one of the most important functions for which the Indian railways exist. While performing this function they are made to serve also as a cloak to hide the huge "unproductive debt" of India, by a system of financing railways out of current revenues and transferring an equivalent portion of the unproductive debt into the account of the railway debt. When India groans under the burden of the so-called "Home" charges her British masters bid her be thankful, pointing their finger to such cooked accounts, for the benefits that she has got in return for British capital. But what are the truths? Are not a very considerable portion of the so-called "productive" debts mere pilings up of transferred "unproductive" debts—debts incurred in England for war and other wasteful purposes? The Indian railways have in charge a total capital of over 650 crores, the capital expenditure, in the five post-war years alone amounting to 150 crores. If the Government really cared for the people, they could turn those huge capital expenditures for the growth in India of wagon-building, locomotive building, bridge-building and other engineering industries. The iron and steel industries of the country could be strengthened to such an extent as to capture not only the home market but foreign markets as well, resulting in a tremendously beneficial effect on the economic condition of the people. In fact, when the post-war programme of 150 crores of capital expenditure for railway expansion was set on foot, the Government promised to spend as much of that amount as was possible to spend in India. A committee was appointed to devise ways and means for the purpose. But the traditional policy of stores purchase was not materially affected; Britain got the lion's share of the orders. The interest of the consumer was used as a plea to reject the higher tenders of Indian manufactures. But those interests were thrown to the four winds by our so-called trustees refusing to purchase at the lowest market when British manufacturers were under-quoted by continental and American manufactures. What have the advocates of co-operation to say to this? Did 150 years of co-operation move the parental Government with the least compunction, when they thus fleeced the dumb millions? What answer have the trustees to make to the charge of swindling their minor words? I say if the Government cared a brass farthing for responding to the goodwill of the Indian people—for their welfare and well-being—they would not have gone in for a reckless programme of railway construction. There was another alternative means of transport that would have benefited India more—I mean the construction of navigation canal and development of inland water transport as a substitute for railway to a large extent. See what Sir Arthur Cotton, of great irrigation fame, has to say on this point. This is what he stated, as early as 1872 before a Parliamentary Committee. "My great point is that what India wants is water carriage; that the railways have completely failed; they cannot carry at the price required; they cannot carry the quantities and they cost the country three millions a year, and increasing, to support them. That steam boat canals would not have cost one-eighth that of the Railways; they would carry any quantities at nominal prices and at any speed; and would require no support from the treasury and would be combined with irrigation." To give an

earnest of his suggestion being practical and practicable, he offered, at a public meeting in Manchester in January 1878, under the auspices of John Bright, to construct all the necessary navigation canals in India at a cost all told of thirty million pounds, that is, a little above thirty crores in our money according to the exchange of the day. Sir Arthur's project, if accepted, would have given India all the transport facilities that the railways give with only one-eighth of the capital expenditure incurred on railways. Moreover, as it could be combined with irrigation the agriculture of the country would have prospered beyond the dreams of avarice. Why did not the Government who pose as the friend of the ryot accept those proposals? Because it would have touched the pockets of the British shareholders of the Railway Companies who could not withstand the competition of the water transport. Because it would have restricted the field of investing surplus British capital. Because it would have restricted the market for Britain's steel and engineering industries. What is that to the benign government if ministering to these British interests meant starvation in the homes of 90 per cent of the population of India, directly and indirectly dependent on agriculture. What does co-operation mean under such a state of affairs? The Indian lamb must walk into the jaws of the British lion to appease his hunger without ruffling his temper. Ungrateful wretch! Why should he not do so? For has not the lion come here all the way to protect him?

His Excellency the Viceroy has in his speech in the Associated Chambers of Commerce triumphantly pointed to the increased volume of India's foreign trade as an indication of her increased prosperity. True that after about two decades the volume of the country's imports and exports has reached their pre-war figure. But is that a sign of prosperity or of decadence? The bloated volume of foreign trade of India—especially the enormous size of its balance of trade—is a sign of economic anaemia in as much as it does not constitute a real exportable surplus. The exports from India are excessive not because her people do not need them to satisfy their wants but because they have to forego a considerable amount of certain absolute necessities of life to pay not only for the visible imports in merchandise but many a large item of invisible imports such as the freight bill and the "home" charges, insurance premia, banking commission, "home" remittances of official as well as non-official Europeans. They constitute a drain on the annual income of India to the extent of something like ten rupees per head of the population. It is a commonplace of economics that the growth of indigenous industries brings about a fall in both exports and imports and this state continues until they saturate the home market and grow to such proportions as to have a real exportable surplus. The war-born industries of India and the stimulation that the Non-co-operation movement gave the cottage industries had something to do with this pre-war fall in the volume of our foreign trade. Does not the return of foreign trade to its pre-war level signify a set-back to those industries? And is not the post-war policy of systematic deflation of currency followed by the Government responsible for that?

We hear so much of Britain's education work in India, of the advancement of the people towards literacy. But is it a thing to boast of? Can it be claimed with truth that India under British rule has progressed, in literacy, in the education of the masses—the special care of a paternal government? Take the example of Bengal. The British bureaucracy claim the credit due for the existence of 40,000 primary schools in the province though they are mostly the result of private enterprise and only a fraction of their cost is met from provincial revenue. This is claimed to be an achievement of 150 years of British rule. We are invited to co-operate in accelerating this process in order to fit ourselves for self-government when the process is complete.

According to Max-Muller there were 80,000 schools in Bengal when the East India Company became the arbiter of the province's destiny. That also being the number of villages in the province it means that there was a school in every village. Now two villages have between them one school—a rare specimen of progress! One hundred and fifty years of co-operation has reduced our primary schools from 80 to 40 thousand—has shut the door of education to half the vil-

lages of the province. If a tree is to be known by its fruits—the character of British rule and the results of co-operation with the British bureaucracy have to be tested here. That India has gone backward in mass education under British rule can be judged from the fact that among the Indian provinces Burma which was the last to be drawn into the enchanted circle has got the highest percentage of literacy. Though the census report confesses the backward movement of that province since its annexation by Lord Dufferin, the policy of co-operation has not been tried long enough and so the progressive realisation of illiteracy has not gone forward to the extent reached by the older provinces.

When universal literacy is made the condition of India's getting self-government and when it is realised that the country has gone backwards towards illiteracy under the British Government, where is the fool who would advocate co-operation with that very Government as the way to self-government?

#### FREEDOM OR SECURITY.

My object in emphasising British exploitation and British misrule in India is to point out the absurdity of co-operation with Britain and not to seek justice or redress from her and neither do I base on them India's right to freedom. Even for a moment I cannot accept the position that had she given us a good government and satisfied the material needs of the people she could derive on that account a title to continue her rule. Freedom is a nation's birth-right; we want freedom for its own sake, not because British rule is injurious to our trade and industries nor because it emasculates our people and makes us pariahs in our own land. The people to-day are pulsating with a new life, they feel an inner urge, a burning desire for freedom and would be satisfied with no amount of material prosperity if they are purchased at the cost of self-rule. Sir Stanley Jackson has denounced freedom purchased at the cost of security, but I say there is no greater calamity that can befall a nation than security purchased at the expense of freedom. And here I cannot resist the temptation of recalling the glorious exhortation of Cicero addressed to Roman citizens: "The name of peace is dear, and the work of peace is truly beneficial; but there is a vast difference between peace and slavery. Peace is the tranquil enjoyment of freedom; slavery is the last and worst of evils, and must be resisted by war, resisted even by death". We want life, we want realisation of our national self and for this peace and order purchased at the cost of freedom is the last thing that we could desire. British courts may give us justice, British police may give us security. What is this security and justice worth when not based on the free will of the nation, when they are imposed by a third party, when we have to swallow them like bitter pills whether or not we consider them real justice and real security. The Hindu flies at his Mahomedan neighbour's throat and the Mahomedan flies at the throat of the Hindu, the police intervenes, British justice binds them down both under the security sections of the Penal Code and they sit in their houses chafing and raging with a grievous sense of wrong, seeking the next best opportunity to wreck vengeance on each other. We do not want this security. It would be far better if the country plunges again into war, if disorder takes the place of this soul-killing Pax Britannica; the life that would emerge out of chaos would bring a new order, a new creation and a new Zion would be built on the ashes of our burnt houses and broken bones. Tired of killing and breaking each other's head there will be a genuine desire for peace. The seeds of justice lying dormant in man would fructify. There would be a real searching of hearts preparing the way for a union based on an understanding of each other's point of view. The system evolved may not be in accordance with the best tradition of European jurisprudence but nevertheless it would be real justice giving real security in as much as it would be based on our assent and will.

#### FREEDOM AT ANY COST.

Britain may give us railways, she may give us schools and hospitals, she may build cities of palaces, magnificent harbours and docks, develop the mineral and the forest wealth of the country, a powerful fleet of dreadnaughts, an invincible army, a wonderful airforce, posts and telegraphs, a fertilising system of irrigation; she may give us all the text-book blessings of British rule, scope for the

development of our trade and industry—she may do all these and more. But will that satisfy India? Materially we may be richer, apparently we may look more civilised, but in reality we shall go down and down by losing our power of initiative. These magnificent appearances would hide the dwarfed soul of the nation, its decay and approaching death. What are these wonders worth if we only enjoy their benefits and have no hand in their planning or making? Enjoyment is not the end of life. It is not in reaping but in sowing that life finds its true realisation, not to sleep a comfortable sleep under the shadow of greatness but to be great ourselves, even at the cost of restless discomfort. For this we have to go out to meet the whirlwind—stake all our borrowed glammers and throw ourselves into the vortex of strife.

A nation is the best manager of its own affairs. It may not manage its affairs as efficiently as some manage theirs. But even in the worst case of misrule it has got a potentiality which far surpasses the value of all apparent peace and order and even material prosperity that others can give. In the one case, it is mechanical and in the other it is big with life and all its possibilities.

British exploitation and British mis-rule are not the *raison d'être* of our demand for freedom; they are the obstacles in our way. We cannot remove them by co-operation. The more we carry co-operation—this old man of the sea—on our shoulders the more will he drive us on. Exhaustion will not bring mercy. It will simply make his grip the more complete. We shall therefore have to follow the war-path, create the spirit of resistance, as Deshbandhu Das put it—call it Non-co-operation, Satyagraha, Passive Resistance, Obstruction, Civil Disobedience or armed revolution, as you please. There is no other way. Britain will not yield an inch of ground unless she is compelled to do so. Nothing is more ridiculous than to look for Swaraj towards Whitehall and expect that one fine morning a shipload of that commodity will be landed on Bombay wharf along with other consignments of British goods. India's freedom must be wrought within her own borders by her own children. The first condition, therefore, if self-assertion of the nation as a whole, united action with a unity of purpose. We have got to mobilise our own forces, close our ranks, stand on our own legs. For this, a radical transformation of national life is indispensable. And to begin with, there should be a thorough self-examination. We should first ask ourselves, why great national movements in India led by great men have failed, while success has crowned similar movements in Turkey, Persia and China. India has now as its leader the greatest man living on earth in the present generation. Why is it that the Non-co-operation movement led by Mahatma Gandhi failed? Why is it that Aurobindo has become a recluse. Chittaranjan died of broken heart and Gandhi retired to his Ashram at Sabarmati, while Kamal Pasha, Reza Khan and Chiang Kaishek sit in state in the councils of free nations? The answer is to be sought in our national defects.

#### OBSTACLES IN THE WAY.

Slavish worship of the past, communal dissension, the caste, the purdah, polygamy, early marriage and such other cankers of the body politic are responsible for failure. We live a life divided into compartments; our patriotism is communal; our unity amounts to mere juxtaposition. Steeped in the prejudices of a mediaeval age, with half the nation losing their vitality behind the purdah and in its turn devaluing the other half; disintegrated by warring caste and creeds which condemn a population more than that of the United Kingdom or Japan as untouchables whose shadow even it is pollution to tread—can we ever expect that we shall be able to bear upon Britain the necessary pressure? In order to assert ourselves in the modern world, we must be modernised. You cannot oppose howitzers, dreadnoughts and aeroplanes with the primitive bow and arrow. What is true of the instrument is also true of the agent. The man power of India has to be fully developed and equipped with up-to-date ideals. The women must be free. You cannot with impunity paralyse half the nation and by its dead weight handicap the other half. Is it not national harikari to impair the vitality of the race by screening half its number behind the purdah, and accelerate the process by the horrible custom of immature parenthood? The thousand and one air-

tight compartments of the social fabric should be knocked down without mercy. The caste must go. What purpose does it serve in the present-day economy of India? The original economic purpose behind it no longer exists. It is not based on division of labour. It serves no useful purpose and exists only to emphasise meaningless, nay, harmful social distinctions—a fruitful source of hatred, jealousy, and conflict—an enervating factor in national life, narrowing down the marriage circles and often resulting in the evils of near blood marriage. Lastly, what can we expect from a people with a polygamous habit? A people so pleasure-seeking, so devoid of self-control, cannot show that self-abnegation which is so very necessary in a soldier of liberty. Unfortunately, the conservative instinct in us is so deep-rooted, that the work of a previous generation is lost to the next. The life work of a Ram Mohan Roy, a Vidyasagar or a Vivekanand brings about some progress. But like a spring we go back to the former position. Josha leading his people to the promised land finds them at the spot from which Moses started. There should, therefore, be a social revolution which must go hand in hand with political revolution. We do not believe in the progressive realisation of freedom. In social matters also gradualism should have no place.

#### ANALOGY OF FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

I know that some may consider it diplomatic not to emphasise at this moment our national defects and weaknesses. Those who hesitate and fear self-examination and self-introspection suffer from an inferiority complex. They are still under illusion as regards the good intentions of the Government. They think that this exposure of our national defects would handicap us in bargaining with Britain. They are still eager to prove their fitness for self-government before the bar of England—the very thing for which we object to appear before the Simon Commission. Admission of weaknesses, in their view, would ruin India's case before her judges. And so the cancerous sores must be bandaged with white linen to get a passport to freedom. I have no such illusion as regards the intentions of the British nation. I believe our salvation lies along the path of our own efforts and therefore, have no hesitation in calling a spade a spade.

I know that I shall be told that free European nations also have their class distinctions and other social evils; that America has her Negro problem; that Japan once had her untouchables; that in South Africa the Boers and the Britishers flew at each other's throat, and not very long ago, the latter invoked outside intervention to protect their interests; that Canada was divided into two hostile camps—the Protestant Britisher and the Catholic French. If social evils did not stand in the way of the independence of the independent countries all over the world; if communal dissensions did not prove an obstacle but rather disappeared when Canada and South Africa got self-government; why should we bother ourselves so much about social evils and communal barriers in the case of India? But apart from the fact that class distinction is not so hidebound and disintegrating as caste distinction, is there not a radical difference between our case and the case of those countries? Canada and South Africa are bound with bonds of kinship with Britain. Besides, the stakes Britain had in those countries were not so vast as those in India. The pressure required to make Britain yield and to give self-government to these countries was nothing in comparison with what would be required in our case. As Britain's imperial greatness hinges on the retention of her Indian dominion, she would mobilise all her forces before she would yield an inch of ground at our demand. Then again retention and enjoyment of freedom is quite a different thing from its acquisition by single-handed efforts. The nations already independent can afford to tolerate in their midst disintegrating elements which would be fatal in our case. We have to deal with a determined enemy equipped with all the strength that modern civilisation connotes and so shall have to raise ourselves to a higher plane of organisation and efficiency in order to get the upper hand in the struggle that is inevitable.

Do we really want freedom? If we do, let us make up our minds that we cannot attain it if we regard it as mere by-product of the ordinary activities of our life, a thing to be picked up while moving along the path of daily routine. If necessary, we shall have to throw away our so called culture, to break away with our past, however dear and respected it may be. I must emphasise, even at the

risk of hurting fondly cherished sentiments and susceptibilities, that we suffer from an undesirable complex; that apotheosis of past culture has become an obsession with us which is really detrimental to our national progress, to our fight for freedom. We look back on our distant past, wonder at its splendour and antiquity and thank God for giving us such a noble heritage, and suffer ourselves be deceived that every thing must be right in our present culture which is the lineal descendant of such a glorious past. Our forefathers composed the Vedic hymns. The Upanishads solved the mysteries of the Unknown. The world owes a debt of of gratitude to India for the invention of the decimal notation. Our astronomers discovered the roundness of the earth, its diurnal rotation round its own axis, and annual revolution round the sun, and the force of gravitation that binds the whole solar system, long before Galileo or Newton was born. The Kalpasutras forestalled Euclid, and Taxila and Nalanda anticipated Oxford and Cambridge by many centuries. Our people clothed themselves with the finest muslins, built lofty minars, lived in magnificent palaces, when the forefathers of the people of modern Europe lived in caves and hollows of trees, and tattooed their bodies to cover their nakedness. Surely a race of men with such splendid records could have no drawbacks. The worst of vices, the worst of wrongs, must be tolerated, if sanction could be found for them in the practices of our forefathers, in a culture so great, so noble.

But we forget that no nation however great has ever exhausted the possibilities of progress; no culture can claim immunity from reformation. We forget too that we have another culture and another past which also have entered into our making. It is the de-humanising Raghunandan-brand culture of the ignoble past of Laxman Sen and Joy Chandra, Umichand and Mirjafar. The past is past, and has a value in so far as it teaches us the underlying causes of the ups and downs of national life. It is the creative vision of the future and the stern reality of the present that should be our earnest concern.

#### SOCIAL REVOLUTION.

The entire social fabric requires a thorough over-hauling, and has to be revolutionised; no amount of tinkering or superimposition of piece-meal reforms would serve our purpose. A frontal attack should be led on the forces of re-action. If it is found that Hindu culture means purdah and Mahomedan culture means the harem, both must go. If Hindu culture means caste system and marriage before puberty, and Mahomedan culture means polygamy, none of them should have a place in our social polity. Mere mental toleration for Hindu and Mahomedan culture is not enough. It is at best a negative virtue; something positive must be done, and the shackles alike of the Shariats and the Shastras should be unceremoniously cast off if they are found to stand in the way of formation of a united nation.

If we cast our eyes abroad what do we see? Turkey, Persia, Afghanistan and China—nations which until yesterday were groaning under the suffocating restrictions imposed upon them by white nations—made a supreme effort to rectify their national defects when they found that they stood in the way of attainment of their freedom. Sun Yat Sen not only waged war against opium, but carried a crusade against a long-standing national custom. To the Chinese, the pigtail was almost as dear as the head of which it formed an adjunct. But when it was thought that this custom of wearing pigtail was an obstacle to progress, China cut off her pigtail in a day. Kemal Pasha threw away the Fez, broke open the doors of the Turkish harem, and separated the church from the state, when he found that these institutions handicapped the nation in their fight against white domination. Nothing was too sacred for him, not even the holy Khilafat, when it stood in the way of independence. Even the other day we saw King Amanullah declaring a crusade against purdah and polygamy, when he realised after his European visit, that these customs, whatever their sanction, are an obstacle to the fulfilment of his dream of a great and powerful Afghanistan. Why did China, Afghanistan and Turkey break away from the past, trampled under foot

the customs and institutions which have the sanction of ancient traditions? Because to them freedom is a matter of life and death; not an artificial make-belief or a matter of economic gain or loss: but an irresistible inner urge, the desire for a new birth and a new life. No sacrifice was too great; culture, tradition, theological formalities, however fondly cherished, and however deep-rooted, were plucked out without the least compunction. They did not pin their faith on their past but on their future. They did not worship the culture of the past because they are out to build the greater culture of the future.

Unfortunately we in India while applauding the achievements of these nations, the revolutionary suddenness with which they shook off the trammels of long-standing prejudices, possess the mentality of a foot-ball crowd, who cheer the players for all they are worth, but would not themselves play, for fear of injuring their limbs. More unfortunate it is, that national leaders not unfrequently either temporise with the forces of reactionary conservatism, or, sit on the fence without committing themselves to any view for fear of public criticism. Mere admiration is of no avail. It simply shows that we are not in earnest about freedom. It is one among the many cravings of our heart and is not very much missed when the others are satisfied. No nation has acquired freedom while in this state of mind.

Be earnest. Let freedom be the thought of your day and the dream of your night. Let the sons and daughters of India gather under her national standard, and, with "Equality and Fraternity" as their battle-cry, march onward, unceasingly, tirelessly, towards the freer life of a free India; undaunted by calamity, unmoved by the wrath and repression of the powers that be. Do not despair. Marshall all your forces, and no power on earth can resist you in your triumphant march to the promised land of the Great India of the future; an India welded and federated into a powerful nation; great in art, great in science; widening the bounds of knowledge and contributing her share to the progress and civilisation of the world; mistress of the Indian Seas, leader of an Asiatic Zollverein, upholder of the right of the coloured races throughout the world.

BANDE MATARAM

## THE PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

The following is the full text of the address delivered by Pandit Motilal Nehru as President of the Congress:—

Friends,

I am deeply grateful to you for the honour you have done me in electing me to preside for a second time over this great National Assembly. That honour, signal as it is, carries with it a burden which is none too light, and the bravest amongst us may well hesitate to shoulder it. You are well aware how I have hesitated. But the exceeding kindness with which you have repeated your confidence in me has left me no choice but to bow to your will and to endeavour to shoulder, as best as I can, the heavy burden of guiding a great nation in its struggle for freedom. That very kindness also emboldens me to expect from you every indulgence and co-operation in the high task with which you have entrusted me.

Nine years ago I had the honour to preside over the National Congress. Martial Law with all its grim consequences and implications had just come and gone, and we were preparing for a great tussle with our alien rulers. That trial of strength came soon after and although we did not emerge victorious, the honours of war were with us and the promise of future victory was ours. The great giant, that is India, woke up for a while and the very awakening shook the foundations of British rule. There was a reaction and a relapse; but again we see unmistakable signs of another and a greater awakening, and who will stop India in her forward stride when she is fully awake? Non-co-operation followed

Dyerism and O'Dwyerism. Something perilously like these is again in the air and again we are on the threshold of another great struggle for freedom.

In this struggle we shall unhappily miss many familiar faces, many trusty counsellors and gallant warriors who are no more. We shall miss Hakeem Ajmal Khan and Lala Lajpat Rai whose death in the course of the year has deprived India in the moment of trial of two of her most trusted and valiant sons. Another ex-president who has passed away was Lord Sinha. Among other national workers who have gone I should like to mention specially Maganlal Gandhi, Gopabandhu Das and Andhraratna Gopalkrishnayya. On behalf of this Congress I offer its respectful condolence to the families of our departed colleagues.

#### IDEALS AND PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS.

I now proceed to place my views and suggestions before you on the immediate work before us. To prevent disappointment I must at the outset prepare you for a plain matter-of-fact statement from a plain matter of fact man of the world as it should be. Let me warn you that you will be disappointed if you expect from me anything in the nature of high idealism presented in an attractive setting of word and phrase. Not that I deprecate idealism in the broader sense or am less convinced than anybody else of the supreme necessity of keeping the highest ideal in view, provided you try to live up to it. But pure idealism completely divorced from realities has no place in politics and is but a happy dream which must sooner or later end in a rude awakening. However high pitched the ideal may be, and the higher the better, the actual work to be done in the pursuit of that ideal must be guided solely by practical considerations. I am sure that we are all agreed upon the ideal though we give it different names. I am equally sure that we are also agreed upon the only way to achieve it. But the tragedy of it all is that we have so magnified our differences on what to my mind are non-essentials that we are unable to see the wood for the trees. These differences lie at the root of our failures, and are responsible for conflicting schools of thought which have rendered common action impossible. In my humble judgment the whole trouble is traceable to varying tendencies in the different schools to over-rate some and under-rate other aspects of the situation. For instance there is one school of thought which exaggerates our weak points to such an extent as to feel utterly helpless in achieving anything except through the grace and goodwill of the very people who are oppressing and exploiting us. As against this the opposite school which takes note either of our weak points or of the strength of the opposing forces and is ready to dash out full steam ahead on uncharted seas. It will be my humble endeavour to face the stern realities of the situation without blinking and then to suggest what seems to me to be the most suitable line of action for your acceptance.

It is, I take it, the duty of every man to help as far as it lies in his power to make his country fit to live in. But the actual process to be employed in bringing about the necessary change from what is to what should be, depends upon circumstances which cannot be the same in all countries and at all times. The essentials considered in the abstract are always the same, but concrete cases present peculiarities of their own to which no general rule or particular example is wholly applicable.

No two peoples in the world have started from exactly the same point or followed exactly the same course. Indeed the same people have had to change their course from time to time to suit the altered conditions of ever-changing situations. We can always profit by the failure of others but seldom, if ever, by their success. The reason is obvious. It is easy to avoid mistakes made by others if we find ourselves in the same or similar predicament in which those mistakes were committed, but it is impossible to bring into existence the potent factors which made for success in some other country if those factors are entirely lacking in our own. The practical problem before us is to find out how under the conditions in which we live and with the materials at our disposal we can deliver the goods at the lowest cost of production. False analogies from other countries can only help to confuse the real issue.

To form a true idea of the work before us we have to answer three questions :



- (1) Where do we stand ?
- (2) What is our destination ? and
- (3) How can we reach our destination ?

I shall endeavour to answer these questions to the best of my ability more from the practical than the dialectical point of view.

#### WHERE DO WE STAND.

We have first to make sure of where we stand so as not to lose our bearings after we start. The point has a two-fold aspect—one in relation to the Government and the other in relation to ourselves. As to the former we all know that whatever political or civil rights we possess they are in the nature of a conditional gift enjoyable during the pleasure of our rulers. They can deprive us, and indeed have from time to time actually deprived thousands of us, of those rights at any moment with or without reason at their sweet will by using the vast reserve of arbitrary power which they retain in their own hands. I will not encumber this address by repeating an oft told tale. It is well-known how the present Government has re-inforced and consolidated itself in the political and economic spheres by legislative, executive, and administrative action. It will serve no useful purpose to take you through the long list of repressive and oppressive measures which have been taken in India from the beginning of British rule down to the present day, or to remind you of how, after we were thoroughly crippled, the door to recovery was completely barred against us. We have been persistently denied all "opportunity for self-realisation, self-development, and self-fulfilment for which Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das fought so valiantly in the closing years of his life. We have been scrupulously shut out of all effective part in the internal and external affairs of our own country.

#### THE "PROGRESS" OF THE COMMISSION.

The solemn promises of responsible government have found fulfilment in that colossal fraud, the Statutory Commission, which is now careering along our streets leaving bleeding heads and broken bones behind. Nothing has so clearly brought out the cold callousness of the officials on the one hand, and the utter helplessness of the people to protect themselves on the other, as the progress of this Commission from town to town. To my mind the circumstances attending it are symptomatic of a grave organic infection and not merely of the well-known functional incapacity of the Government. It shows the presence of the toxin of Dyerism in their internal economy. The happenings at Lahore and Lucknow are only mild eruptions on the surface indicating the deep-rooted disease within. We are indebted to the stupidity of the special correspondent of an English newspaper of Calcutta for a glimpse into the real mentality of the members of the Commission which may be taken as a faithful reflection of the mentality of the Government. He says :—

"The Cawnpore scenes have apparently put the finishing touch on a psychic impression which the riotous scenes in Delhi had begun. Some of the Commissioners are making no secret of their indignation that such things should be permitted. I feel that if some of the Commissioners had to write their report this week Lord Salisbury's famous prescription in another matter, 'twenty years of resolute government,' would recommend itself much more to their minds than any advance whatever."

So that the only way to achieve responsible government for India is to fawn upon the great Commissioners and flatter them with a false declaration of confidence. And the surest way to invite "twenty years of resolute government" is to show your true feelings about the Commission. All I need say is that India will refuse to take responsible government as a reward for servility and will welcome "resolute government"; but whether it will last for twenty years the future alone can decide. This prophet of evil has even dared to envisage the future. He proceeds to say :

"I seemed to sense a vision of realities stark and grim, and catch from the future the tramp of marching men."

These remarks were called forth by the grand boycott demonstration which greeted the Commissioners on their arrival at Cawnpore. It is remarkable that while this correspondent was sending his inspired vision, the Police Superintendent of Cawnpore was writing to the organisers thanking them for the excellence of their

arrangements and the absence of any untoward incident. That letter has, I believe, been published in the press. But the editor excelled the correspondent, as was befitting his superior position, by indulging in a particularly venomous attack, in the course of which he threatened resistance of the Indian demand for freedom to the "last ounce of ammunition." I am sure that if this editor and his correspondent had an ounce of discretion between them both, they would not have so easily given away official secrets. But we must thank them for their timely warning and assure them that we are ready. There can be nothing better than 'resolute Government' at this juncture to bring matters to a head.

#### THE VICEROY'S THREAT.

Our English friends affect to be shocked at these demonstrations. I should have ignored the foolish talk in which they have indulged but a responsible statement has recently been publicly made in this City on the subject by the Viceroy, and I feel that I cannot allow it to go unchallenged. However much one may regret untoward incidents, the right to hold peaceful demonstrations to give expression to strong public feeling has never been doubted. The demonstrations held after the return of the Commission to India have been characterised as "unmannerly and offensive." My answer is that such demonstrations must in their very nature be 'offensive' to those against whom they are made, and it is hardly reasonable to expect drawing room manners from a hostile crowd. The Viceroy has uttered two platitudes and a threat. The first platitude is: "However much those who organise such demonstrations may themselves deprecate violence, they are, when it comes to the point, often quite incapable of controlling the forces they have excited." The second is: "Those who deliberately embarked on a course so crude, so senseless and so dangerous, whatever the object they may mistakenly desire to serve, incur a very heavy responsibility."

The threat is that "it is the plain duty of Government to take whatever steps it deems necessary to prevent the recurrence of these discreditable incidents."

I agree with His Excellency on the first platitude and would also agree with him on the second if he could substitute the word "natural" for the words "crude and senseless." But both platitudes have no relation whatever to actual facts. As regards the threat it was anticipated by the English newspaper a week before; it indicates an early materialisation of 'resolute government.' I have already dealt with the letter and I have nothing further to add. In regard to the former I have to point out that it has been established to our entire satisfaction by public statements of responsible Indian leaders, which no amount of departmental enquiry can controvert that all violence at these demonstrations was started by the Police, and attempts made by the people at one or two places to retaliate were speedily put down by their leaders. But if a stray missile struck a motor car, one of the occupants of which happened to be a lady, or some men in the large crowds came too near the great Commissioners and waived their black flags in close proximity to their highly respectable noses, is it a matter about which any undue fuss need be made? I am sure that under similar circumstances worse things would have happened in England. I should like to put a few questions to those who have affected righteous indignation at the happenings at Lahore, Lucknow and Cawnpore. Those questions are:

#### FIVE QUESTIONS TO ENGLISHMEN.

(1) Would it be possible in any European country more specially in England for a commission of enquiry, which the people looked upon as a national insult, to travel in the comfort and safety enjoyed by Sir John Simon and his colleagues in India?

(2) Would not all the silken flags and gold embroidered decorations such as were displayed in the Butler Park have been torn to shreds and all the beautiful multi-coloured electric lamps, shining on them, smashed to pieces, if any attempt were made in England to entertain publicly, men connected with a mission as highly unpopular among Englishmen as Sir John Simon and his colleagues are among Indians?

(3) How would any Englishman like his house to be broken into, his guests treated to a sound thrashing and then arrested and imprisoned for a night for making a peaceful demonstration from his own terrace?

(4) How would an Englishman like to be imprisoned in his own house, for however short a time, for holding opinions against the Government of the day?

(5) How long would a government last in England which allowed the things mentioned in questions (3) and (4) to happen?

We know that the house of the great Nationalist nobleman of Oudh, the Maharaja of Mahmudabad, was surrounded with a cordon of police while his reactionary compeers were entertaining the Commission in a neighbouring park. The Maharaja, as is well-known, bravely stands for the boycott of the Commission and has refused to take part in any function given in its honour. Where is the liberty of the ordinary citizen when the premier Baron of Oudh, a retired Home Member of the U. P. Government, decorated by it with the highest honours in its gift, can be imprisoned in his own house, simply because he holds an opinion disliked by the Government? Is this anything very different from the "resolute government" foreshadowed by the Viceroy and the English newspaper. It has actually come upon us since.

The recent murder of a police official at Lahore has provided an excuse to those whose minds are already made up, to forge new weapons to destroy the forces of Nationalism. It need hardly be said that the crime is to be regretted. Congressmen whether belonging to the school of independence or that of dominion-status, stand, and have always stood, for a policy of strict non-violence and have given practical proof of the sincerity of their convictions on numerous occasions, including the recent incidents at Lahore, Lucknow, Cawnpore and Patna. It is at present impossible to say whether the Lahore murder had a political significance. But assuming that it had, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that the real responsibility for such incidents lies on the shoulders of the Government. History teaches us that incidents like these are symptomatic of a condition which can only be dealt with effectively by a wise and radical change of policy, and not by resort to coercive methods which defeat their own purpose and are resisted by the people with all the strength of which they are capable. But the bureaucracy has little use for lessons of history. The orgy of repression has already begun in the Panjab and is likely to extend at no distant date to the other provinces.

Forgive me for taking so much of your time over the Commission. It might well have been completely ignored, were it not for the direct bearing it has on the work before us. It is a portent of evil, but not without the good which comes out of all evil. It has shown us the fine courage of our men, specially the students, their serene coolness under the gravest provocation, their splendid stand against brutal *lathi* assaults with their own empty hands crossed on their chests, their gallant rescues of their comrades and leaders in utter disregard of the injuries inflicted on them. Let those who take this for cowardice try their "resolute government" and they will soon be disillusioned. They will have the satisfaction of shooting brave inoffensive men with their backs to the wall and chests bared to receive the bullet.

#### THE ECONOMIC SPHERE.

Let us now turn to the economic sphere. To have an adequate idea of the enormous exploitation to which we have been subjected, and of the enormous extent of the economic hold acquired by England over us by legislation and otherwise, it would be necessary to review the whole period of the British occupation of India. I shall however content myself by reminding you of a few historical facts the accuracy of which cannot be questioned. Besides maintaining the costliest civil and military services in the world at our expense, the solicitude of our trustees, as they delight to call themselves, has been mainly directed to the creation of markets in India for England's manufactures. This laudable object has been achieved by a number of direct and indirect methods too numerous to be dealt with satisfactorily in the course of this address. It is a long story beginning from the days of the well-known barbarities committed on the Dacca artisans and continued through periods of more refined spoliation till we come to the present-day powerful banking, commercial, and industrial combines which are now successfully choking off indigenous enterprise.

But by far the most important economic hold which the Government has ac-

quired over the country by legislation and otherwise is through its manipulation of the currency. It will be tedious to go into the history of this highly technical question, but the fact is now admitted that the present depression in Indian commerce and industry, and the low buying power of the cultivator are due to the action of the Government in forcing up the rupee from 1s. 4d. to 1s. 6d. It has resulted in pinching the over-taxed cultivator of  $12\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. in the price of the raw materials produced by him, and giving a bonus of  $12\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. to the importer of foreign manufactures into India. If the Government had the interest of India at all in view it would have reduced the land tax by  $12\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. and imposed an import duty of  $12\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. on all goods which can be manufactured in the country including textile goods.

#### SIR GEORGE GODFREY'S SPEECH EXAMINED.

It was left to Sir George Godfrey of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to discover for the first time the other day that all the authentic records of India's prosperous trade and commerce before the advent of the British were pure legends. In the course of an utterance at the last meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce attacking everything Indian, he justified the British exploitation of India using fiction for fact. He said; "If Lancashire is accused of devastating India, Lancashire has equally devastated the English countryside." What a comparison! I presume Sir George Godfrey is in possession of some history of England unknown to the rest of the world which records the fact that the weavers of the English countryside were subjected to the pains and penalties that were inflicted, as proved by European witnesses, on Indian weavers by the East India Company, that the English countryside was compelled to buy Lancashire cloth in the place of homespun; and the further fact that a Cotton Excise Duty was imposed on Lancashire textile while foreign goods were imported free of duty.

His reference to Indian shipping betrays the same fondness for fiction as his reference to textile does—for facts I must refer you and him to the excellent literature that Mr. Haji has published on his harmless and timely bill. Indian shipping was as deliberately sacrificed for the English interest as was India's greatest cottage industry. Now that a belated bill is before the legislature seeking somewhat to stop the continuance of the grave wrong done to Indian shippers by the English monopoly, the monopolists accuse us of attempting racial discrimination and pass a resolution demanding that the legislature shall not have the power to pass that bill.

Not content with distorting history this English merchant prince almost hit below the belt when he suggested that the framers of the draft constitution now before the country had sought to disfranchise Britishers. It was his duty before he brought so grave a charge against responsible men to make sure of his facts. He should have known that as soon as the Committee discovered that there was a possibility of a doubt they removed it in their supplementary report which was before the country days before Sir George Godfrey delivered his oration.

#### OUR SOCIAL EVILS.

It will be clear from what I have said above that the process of forging new chains to keep us in perpetual bondage has gone on simultaneously with a long protracted, ruthless exploitation of our material resources. While, however, the Government has to answer for a great deal it must be frankly confessed that we cannot honestly acquit ourselves of all blame for our present plight. The strength or weakness of a nation depends upon the strength or weakness of the individual which keeps its component parts together. In our case this tie has not for centuries been very strong and with the march of the new order of things has lost much of what binding force it ever had. There is no overlooking the fact that we are divided into a number of large and small communities, more or less disorganised and demoralised. The Government is undoubtedly responsible for the prevailing ignorance and poverty among the masses and in a very large measure for the growing hostility among the classes. But it certainly is not to blame for the evils of our own social system, which has relegated millions of our people as good as ourselves, to the category of untouchables and depressed classes, and has put

our women under restrictions which deprive them not only of many natural rights but also of the opportunity to render national service. Nor is the Government solely accountable for all the communal differences which have contributed a dark chapter to the recent history of our own times.

#### RELIGION AND POLITICS.

The Committee of the All-Parties has dealt fully in its report with the communal problem in India. It has offered a solution which I trust this Congress will accept. The problem before us however is a wider and more fundamental one than a mere adjustment of communal differences. It is what place, if any, religion, as practised and understood to-day, should occupy in our public life?

Whatever the higher conception of religion may be, it has in our day-to-day life come to signify bigotry and fanaticism, intolerance and narrow-mindedness, selfishness and the negation of many of the qualities which go to build a healthy society. Its chief inspiration is hatred of him who does not profess it, and in its holy name more crimes have been committed than for any professedly mundane object. Can any sane person consider the trivial and ridiculous causes of conflict between Hindu and Moslem, or between sect and sect, and not wonder how any one with a grain of sense should be affected by them?

The aim of all education and progress is to develop the collective instinct in man; to teach him to co-operate with his neighbours; and to make him feel that his individual good depends on the good of society as a whole. Only thus can the selfish and individualistic instincts be suppressed and the energy of mankind be diverted from mutual competition to co-operation for the common good. Religion as practised to-day is, however, the greatest separatist force. It puts artificial barriers between man and man and prevents the development of healthy and co-operative national life. Not content with its reactionary influences on social matters, it had invaded the domain of politics and economics, and affects every aspect of our life. Its association with politics has been to the good of neither. Religion has been degraded and politics has sunk into the mire. Complete divorce of one from the other is the only remedy.

But this is not all. A strange fatality has been pursuing our political activities from a very early stage. We have never been entirely free from serious differences among those who have taken up the patriotic duty of liberating their country in right earnest and have not winced at any sacrifice in discharging it to the best of their ability. These differences have inevitably set back the hands of the clock and opened the door to disruptive forces. There have been serious splits among the leaders which have spread with lightning rapidity to the rank and file on almost every occasion when a forward move has been taken or even contemplated. We would do well to profit by the lesson of the past lest the inexorable fate which has been pursuing us for the last 20 years or more should overtake us again. It is close upon our heels already in the garb of Socialism and will devour both complete independence and Dominion Status if you let it approach nearer.

The brief outline I have given above will show that we stand at present in the thickest part of the wood. We suffer from two sets of serious disabilities—those imposed upon us by foreign rule and those of our own making. It is difficult to stand against the foreigner without offering him a united front. It is not easy to offer a united front while the foreigner is in our midst domineering over us.

The two sets of disabilities together form a vicious circle around us and we stand in the centre, heavily handicapped by one in trying to get rid of the other. We have to break through the vicious circle before we can hope to be out of the wood.

This is my answer to the question—where do we stand?

#### WHAT IS OUR DESTINATION?

The second question is: What is our destination?

My answer straight and simple is "Freedom" in substance, and not merely in form, by whatever name you call it. The Madras Congress has declared the goal as complete independence. The All-Parties' Committee has recommended dominion status. I have explained my position more than once but with your permission I shall re-state it here as clearly as I can. To put in a nutshell it comes

to this : I am for complete independence—as complete as it can be—but I am not against full dominion status—as full as any dominion possesses it to-day—provided I get it before it loses all attraction. I am for severance of British connection as it subsists with us to-day but am not against it as it exists with the dominions.

#### INDEPENDENCE AND DOMINION STATUS

Let me explain. National freedom unrestricted and unqualified is the natural craving of the human soul. I do not believe that there is a single Indian, be he or she a member of a party or group, or one completely detached from all parties and groups, who does not love freedom or will not have it. Differences arise only when the question is raised whether it is possible to have and to keep freedom : and it is then that we find opinion sharply divided. There are those who have the faith in them and in their countrymen to answer the question by an emphatic "yes"—and I may at once say that I am one of them. But there are also those who will shake their heads, some from conviction and others in doubt. Complete independence is the goal of the former, dominion status that of the latter. I will not undertake a fruitless enquiry into the relation or want of relation between independence and dominion status. It does not matter to me whether theoretically they belong to the same or different stocks, or whether one is or is not the negation of the other. What matters to me is that Dominion Status involves a very considerable measure of freedom bordering on complete Independence and in any day preferable to complete dependence. I am therefore not against an exchange of our abject dependence with whatever measure of freedom there is in full Dominion Status if such exchange is offered. But I cannot make Dominion Status my goal as it has to come from another party over whom I have no control. The only way I can acquire such control is by working in right earnest for complete Independence. I say 'in right earnest' because I know mere bluff will not take me far ; it is only when complete Independence is in sight that the party in power will be inclined to negotiate for something less. Empty bluff will not carry us to that stage. Solid work and ungrudging sacrifice alone will do it. When that work is done, and sacrifice made, the party having the whip in hand will dictate. Whether it is to be dominion status or complete independence will depend upon whether the conditions then prevailing are similar to those of Ireland or to those of the United States of America at the time when each came into what she now is. Meanwhile, there is nothing before us but a protracted life-and-death struggle on the one side, and continued repression relieved by an occasional dose of undiluted oppression on the other. It follows therefore that whatever the ultimate goal, we must be prepared to traverse the same thorny path to reach it. If we are not so prepared, independence will ever be an idle dream and dominion status an ever receding wisp of the wisp.

#### DOMINION STATUS ON THE WAY TO INDEPENDENCE.

I must here notice another part of the Viceroy's speech from which I have already quoted. He draws a dark picture of the damage that India is "likely to suffer at the hands of its false friends who would guide it towards the morass of independence." The description of 'independence' as a 'morass' is rather original. It would be more correct to say that we have to cross a morass before we arrive to independence. But the morass surrounds us on all sides and we can arrive nowhere except by crossing it. That being so our friends who support the movement say : why not make for independence pure and unadulterated which depends upon your own effort, however long and arduous, instead of floundering in the direction of dominion status which depends upon the goodwill of Britain ? They argue that it will be sheer waste of time, energy, and sacrifice first to struggle in the morass for dominion status and when you find your way barred then to brangle back to the starting point and plunge again into the same morass to struggle for independence. From Lord Irwin's point of view this argument is unanswerable. From my point of view dominion status is passed on the way to independence, and if it is refused you have simply to press on to your destination which must always be independence. Lord Irwin's argument based on loyalty to the Crown can easily be overstressed. Loyalty is a fine thing but the strain it can bear is not unlimited.

But it is obvious that independence does not mean walking out of the world.

If you continue to live in it you must come across others who also live in the same world. It is neither necessary nor possible for the existence of an independent state in the present-day world conditions to cut off all political, economic, and social relations with other states. Indeed, the more independent you are the more necessary it will be to establish relations all round. When, therefore, we talk of the severance of the British connection we do not mean a cessation of all relations, but such appropriate change in existing relations as is necessary to transform a dependency into a free state. The extent of the change will depend upon the extent of freedom we achieve. If it is dominion status, the change, as it is now well understood, will be from a dependency to 'an autonomous nation, free and equal member of the British Commonwealth of nations.' If, however, it is complete independence, India will stand out of the British Commonwealth of Nations and the nature of her relations with Great Britain will be determined by treaty and mutual understanding. In either case, some connection with other nations including the British must subsist if we mean to take an active part in shaping our own future and that of the world.

Mahatma Gandhi presiding at the Belgaum Congress said :

"In my opinion, if the British Government mean what they say and honestly help us to equality, it would be a greater triumph than a complete severance of the British connection. I would therefore strive for Swaraj within the Empire but would not hesitate to sever all connection if severance became a necessity through Britain's own fault. I would thus throw the burden of separation on the British people "

#### ACQUIRE ABILITY TO BE INDEPENDENT.

This was four years ago. Much water has since flown under the bridges. We have striven and striven hard for Swaraj within the Empire but the British people have not so far shown any inclination to help us honestly to equality. All the indications have been to the contrary. Indeed responsible British statesmen have repeatedly declared that full dominion status is yet a far cry. I therefore fully sympathise with those who have exhausted their patience and have now raised the cry of complete separation. But let us fully grasp the meaning of Mahatma Gandhi. I am sure he never meant that the moment we felt sure that Britain was not going to give us dominion status we were to declare for independence irrespective of our own readiness to enforce it. He was, to my mind, referring to the time when we acquired what I have described as the whip hand. The time admittedly has not arrived.

In the same address, Mahatmaji said :

"The better mind of the world desires to-day not absolutely independent states warring one against another but a federation of friendly inter-dependent states. The consummation of that event may be far off. I want to make no grand claim for our country. But I see nothing grand or impossible about our expressing our readiness for universal inter-dependence rather than independence. It should rest with Britain to say that she will have no real alliance with India."

And then comes the pregnant passage which I earnestly commend to your very serious consideration. It runs thus :—

"I desire the ability to be totally independent without asserting the independence. Any scheme that I would frame while Britain declares her goal about India to be complete equality within the Empire would be that of an alliance and not of independence without alliance."

So far as Britain's formal declaration of her goal about India is concerned, it is complete equality within the Empire. The scheme prepared by the All-Parties' Committee and adopted by the Conferences is therefore in full accord with Mahatmaji's views.

The truth is that we cannot get anything from England except by proving our strength. The way to acquire that strength is to organise ourselves and our resources. Such organisation is as necessary for those who desire dominion status as it is for those who work for complete independence. That being so the obvious course is to work together up to the point the weakest of us is ready to go,

If he is not disillusioned by the time we reached that point, let us leave him there and forge ahead.

#### A MISAPPREHENSION REMOVED.

I must here ease the minds of those who fear that the moment dominion status is granted to us, we shall use it to throw off British connection altogether. In the speech from which I have already quoted Lord Irwin said :

"Those in Great Britain who sympathise most warmly with the ideal of India attaining at the earliest possible moment the status of any of the other great Dominions of the Crown, will find the ground cut from their feet if British opinion ever becomes convinced, as some apparently are now endeavouring to convince it, that the so-called dominion status was only valued by India as a stepping stone to a complete severance of her connection with the British Commonwealth."

There is no foundation for this apprehension and there is no reason whatever why we should seek complete severance of British connection if we are put on terms of perfect equality with the Dominions. If we are not put on such terms it will not be dominion status ; we will not take a colourable imitation. It must therefore be clearly understood that dominion status has to be offered and accepted with all its implications, its rights and obligations, which both parties will be in honour bound to respect and uphold. But as Mahatmaji has put it, we "would not hesitate to sever all connection, if severance became necessary through Britain's own fault." It is conceivable that we may be driven to separation by the treatment accorded to us by Britain herself, and in that case we shall have precisely the same remedy as the dominions now have.

It will, I hope, now be clear why I say that I am for complete independence and at the same time not against dominion status, if the latter comes without avoidable delay. It is impossible to say which of the parties will have the whip hand at the psychological moment. Great Britain has the whip hand to-day, and the psychological moment for her to offer, and for India to accept, full dominion status, has arrived. If Great Britain will not avail herself of the opportunity India will have the whip hand to-morrow, and then will come the psychological moment for her to wrest complete independence from Great Britain. No offer of dominion status will then be acceptable.

#### DESHABANDHU DAS'S OFFER RECALLED.

Objection is taken to the preparation of any scheme of government on dominion lines by us on the ground that it is for Britain, and not India, to make the offer. It is pointed out that those who enjoy dominion status did not fight for it but achieved it in the course of their struggle for complete independence, the offer having come from Great Britain. I am quite clear in my own mind that substantially the same process will have to be repeated in India if we are ever to have dominion status, and as I have already pointed out, we cannot reasonably accept it unless complete independence is in sight. But I cannot understand why it is not open to us to offer terms to Great Britain as much as it is open to her to offer terms to us. If the offer is honourable to those who make it as well as to those who accept it, it does not matter to me who is the proposer and who the acceptor. I do not believe that we have among the soldiers of independence a more fearless and selfless patriot and a greater fighter for the freedom of India than Deshabandhu Chittaranjan Das was. Let me recall to your minds the great speech he delivered at Faridpore in which he said that all he needed was a full and fair opportunity for self-realisation, self-development and self-fulfilment. He did not hesitate to make an offer of full co-operation to the bureaucracy if it would only afford that opportunity, show a real change of heart, and guarantee "Swaraj in the fullest sense to come automatically in the near future." That offer was no sign of weakness. It was made in the full consciousness of strength. "If," he declared, "our offer of settlement should not meet with any response we must go on with our national work on the lines which we have pursued for the last two years so that it may become impossible for the Government to carry on the administration of the country except by the exercise of its exceptional power ; and when the



time comes we shall not hesitate to advise our countrymen not to pay taxes which are sought to be raised by the exercise of their exceptional powers."

Those were the words of a statesman, a political philosopher and a determined fighter for liberty, a man who believed in the doctrine of self-reliance which he preached. It was not beneath his dignity to offer a settlement while he was preparing for a great fight. As a matter of fact, Britain has already made an offer of a kind in the most solemn manner she could, by embodying it in the preamble of the Government of India Act. It is true that this offer is utterly inadequate and wholly unacceptable. The proper course is to make a counter offer. This is what the All-Parties Committee has done.

#### THE QUESTION OF SANCTIONS.

A good deal has been said about developing sanctions. On this point I am content to quote Mahatma Gandhi. Commenting on the All-Parties Committee's Report he said in "Young India":

"There is still much diplomatic work to be done. But more than the diplomatic work is that of forging the sanction. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru truly observed that whether it was dominion status or independence, a proper sanction would be necessary if the National Demand was to be enforced. Bardoli has shown the way if the sanction has to be non-violent. The Congress creed has non-violence as its integral part. There is no denying the fact that non-violence had receded in the background before Bardoli. But even as the Nehru Report has made an unanimous demand possible, Bardoli has brought back the vanishing faith in non-violence. If, then, we are sure of the sanction, we need not worry whether Swaraj is otherwise spelt dominion status or independence. Dominion status can easily become more than independence, if we have sanction to back it. Independence can easily become a farce if it lacks sanction. What is in a name if we have the reality? A rose smells just as sweet whether you know it by that name or any other. Let us therefore make up our minds as to whether it is to be non-violence or violence and let the rank and file work for the sanction in real earnest even as the diplomats must work at constitution making."

I have now given my answer to the second question I formulated. It is:

Our destination is Freedom the form and extent of which will depend upon the time when, and the circumstances under which it comes.

#### HOW CAN WE REACH OUR DESTINATION?

Meanwhile there is nothing for us but to do the work necessary for all forms and all degrees of freedom. That work is one and the same and I now proceed to consider it.

It must be remembered that the same Congress which declared complete independence as our goal, by another resolution invited all parties to confer with its Working Committee to devise a constitution for India based on common agreement. It was then as obvious as it is now that no party outside the Congress was prepared to set its goal as high as complete independence from the point of view of its own conception of practical politics. The Congress must therefore be taken to have embarked upon the enquiry with full knowledge of this fact. What then was the object of directing the Working Committee to call an All Parties Conference or Convention if complete independence was not merely the goal but the next immediate step? It certainly was not for the mere fun of it. The importance of the Convention and the political value of its agreed conclusion are quite obvious and must have been so to the Congress when it passed the resolution. But the Congress could not, at the time, have any clear conception as to what the next step would be after the All-Parties Convention came to decisions. That would depend upon the extent of agreement reached and the nature of the decisions arrived at which could not then be known.

#### THE NATIONAL CONVENTION.

The Working Committee has faithfully carried out the instructions of the Madras Congress and called the All-Parties Conferences. The remarkable success of these national gatherings, in their endeavour to find the highest common basis for a constitution for India, is well known. Never before, in the history of our public

movements, so many organisations—political, labour, religious, communal, and commercial—as took part in those gatherings have come together on one and the same platform. There can be no doubt that the credit of his great achievement—perhaps the greatest since the day of Non-co-operation—belongs to the Congress which conceived the idea, and more specially to Dr. Ansari, the President of the Congress who never spared himself in carrying it out. The resolutions of the National Convention will come up before you in the course of this session. You will have all the materials before you and it will be your solemn duty to discharge the obligation inherited from the Madras Congress to determine the next step. You have succeeded to the great asset left by the Congress—the goal of complete independence. You cannot shirk its liability. The future will depend largely on the manner in which you discharge that liability.

The recommendations of the reports of the Committee appointed by the All-Parties Conference are all based on the principle of the highest common agreement. That principle I earnestly commend to this Congress for its acceptance. The Congress is in itself an All-Parties Conference and it is its duty to deal with every question coming before it from the point of view of the greatest good of all the parties and the people of India. So far the Congress has been discharging this duty on its own initiative taking upon itself the responsibility of determining what is good for the people and regulating its policy accordingly. This is the first time in the history of the Congress that it invited the people of India through the various organisations representing them, to determine for themselves what is good for them. In doing so the Congress acted on the principle of self-determination. Those invited have accepted the invitation of the Congress as they never did before—no not even in the palmy days of Non-co-operation—when with all the millions behind it, the Congress was not supported by many well-known organisations. There is not one organisation—political, social, religious, communal, commercial, industrial or labour—of any note or standing to-day which did not take part in the All-Parties Conferences and the National Convention or which, having so taken part, has not given up much that it valued for the sake of unity. It is an achievement of which any country in the world might well be proud. That achievement will now be presented to you. Will you accept it or spurn it? If you have any faith in your claim for self-determination, you have no right to spurn it even if you disagree. The only question is, whether there is such a consensus of agreement on the scheme that it can be treated as self-determined. I say there is. The only dissentients are a few communalists. I must say frankly that I do not understand them and am unable to reconcile their claim for special communal advantages with their desire for complete independence. Some of these would reserve to a handful the right to arrest the whole course of the country's legislation. Others are prepared to go back even on joint electorates if a few additional seats are not given to them in the legislatures. Their dissent with a scheme of dominion status can hardly be taken seriously.

I have so far commented adversely on the speech of the Viceroy delivered in this city recently, but I think I owe it to His Excellency to express my appreciation of another part of the same speech which is germane to the point I am discussing. He said :

“There is no use pretending that the different classes, the different communities, the different races in India will not have different standards, but in such disagreement there is nothing unhealthy or unnatural. If interests clash it does not mean that one set of interests is to be swept away or that one community need smother its individuality to suit the whole. Each has its own good qualities, its own ideals to pursue, its own rights to maintain, but each should be capable of self-realisation in its own sphere and at the same time taking its own place in the whole scheme of national life.”

I heartily endorse this sentiment but am not quite sure that His Excellency and I are not at cross purposes. I claim that the Report of the All-Parties Committee allows ample scope to every community to pursue its own ideals and affords it ample opportunity for “self-realisation in its own sphere.” and at the same time given to each “its own place in the whole scheme of national life.” I have

however, a shrewd suspicion that Lord Irwin does not mean the same thing. But let me proceed.

Apart from the principle of self-determination the only other criterion by which you can judge the All-Parties scheme is the real and lasting good of the country. Spurn it, by all means, if you honestly think that it is not for the real and lasting good of the country and only offers a temporary advantage, at the sacrifice of the ultimate goal. But do not spurn it, merely, because it conflicts with theories and dogmas which have no relation to the living facts of the situation.

Neither the authors of the recommendations nor the Conference which have adopted them, have put them forward as a counsel of perfection. Speaking for myself and my colleagues on the Committee, I can say that there is not one of us who left to himself would have produced the identical report which, acting together we have considered it our duty to make. There are points on which our recommendations run counter to the settled convictions of every one of us, as for instance reservation of seats for minorities. We were, however, compelled to recommend such reservation by the exigencies of the situation.

The one question, therefore, that this Congress has to answer is, whether these recommendations and resolutions, taken as a whole are so utterly outrageous, so thoroughly inconsistent, with the real and lasting good of the country that it is its duty to reject them in spite of the consensus of opinion in the country behind them. If they are not this Congress has no option but to accept them.

#### RECEPTION OF NEHRU REPORT IN THE COUNTRY.

It will be observed that the recommendations are divisible under two main heads—general and communal. Both are so inter-related that you cannot accept the one and reject the other. We cannot overlook the Lucknow resolution, whereby all parties agreed that “every one of them will stand by it (the Report) as a whole and will refuse to accept any single part of it without giving full force and effect to all other parts.” There are communal and politico-communal organisations which favour dominion status and have not only joined the communal agreements as parties, but given up what they considered substantial rights for the sake of an agreed constitution. Many hundreds of public meetings have been held throughout the country, attended by people of all shades of opinion, which have approved of the recommendations as a whole. It is impossible to say how many accepted the communal solution because of the draft constitution for dominion status and how many accepted the latter because of the former. We have to keep our faith with all.

The position, as I view it, is this. Here is a constitution agreed upon by the various parties, invited by the Congress to frame it. These parties know that the goal of the Congress is complete independence. They do not ask the Congress to change its goal, but present to it the result of their labours such as it is, and say that they are prepared to go thus far and no further at present. They offer their co-operation and demand that of the Congress, to enable both to reach the point up to which they are prepared to go. After the point is reached they reserve liberty to themselves and to the Congress to consider the next step. Is the Congress going to refuse them this co-operation and this liberty? Is the Congress after bringing them together going to send them back to the wilderness in isolated groups, each to shift for itself, and leave the Congress to wrangle over the respective merits of complete independence and dominion status to the end of time? If the Congress will do that, it will abdicate its proper function to guide the nation on its forward march. The occasion calls for skilful generalship, and not academic discussions which take us nowhere. The nation is knocking at your door. You must open it wide—wide enough for every one to enter, or lose your rightful place of high command. My advice to you is to accept the offer. If you do so the way to your destination is clear.

Begin at the point at which the All-Parties have now arrived and push forward with them as far as they would go, then pause and take stock of your equipment, and finally throw the strength of your whole being into one great effort to reach the goal.

That is my answer to the question : how can we reach our destination ?

## THE FUTURE PROGRAMME.

The first, and the most obvious step is to set our own house in order. For this purpose, rally all the parties under the banner of the Congress and prepare to march shoulder to shoulder with them to the farthest end of the common road. That will be the first part of the arduous journey. I suggest the following programme for it:

1. Popularising the communal solution, agreed in at the All-Parties' Conferences, in the country, by intensive propaganda in the press and on the platform and organising village to village lectures.
2. Organising similar propaganda in regard to the Delhi Unity Conference and the Madras Congress, with such improvements as this Congress might make on communal matters, other than those dealt with by the Conferences.
3. Work among the untouchables and depressed classes.
4. Organisation of labour, agricultural and industrial.
5. Other village organisation.
6. Popularising khaddar and boycott of foreign cloth.
7. Campaign against social customs which retard social inter-course and national growth, more especially a crusade against the purdah and the other disabilities of women.
8. Intensive campaign against the drink and opium curse.
9. Publicity.

It will be observed that this is a predominantly social programme. I claim no originality for any of its items and have merely selected them out of a long list which, with the exception of the first item, has been before the Congress and the country for years past. I may, however, be pardoned when I say that we have so far not done much worth speaking in carrying out the constructive work. Commonplace as this programme may appear, it is the only true foundation on which the hopes of the high priests of complete independence, as well as those of the votaries of dominion status, can be safely built. To the former I say, that the measure of their capacity, for the tremendous sacrifice that the first real step towards their goal will demand is the measure of their success in carrying out this seemingly unpretentious programme. To the latter I say, that the only chance there is of dominion status being ever offered to them lies in the complete fulfilment of this very programme.

Large sums of money and organised work throughout the country are necessary if we are to set about the business in right earnest. It is not merely the business of any particular organisation or individuals in the country who have the least desire to attain any measure of freedom. Among those who took part in the Convention there were the representatives of all interests in the country—there were the wealthy, the well-to-do, and the poor. Let the wealthy give of their abundance, the well-to-do their savings, and the poor of their pittance. Let the Indian Princes, great and small, come forward with munificent donations, and give practical proof of the great solicitude they profess for the general well being of their country. In the social part of the programme all can join including Government servants. But will the Government let them? This is the acid test of the honesty of the pious intentions and wishes expressed by British statesmen in England and India. Let the Government, if it honestly means what it professes, publicly declare that the Indian Princes, the Indian commercial and industrial magnates, the great zamindars, and Government servants have full liberty to help the social work in every way possible. Let there be no secret instructions to the contrary in sealed covers or in cipher, circulated at the same time. Let the English Banks undertake that they will not turn away Indian commercial and industrial concerns from their door if they subscribe to this fund. Let these three things be done, and I shall see that enough money is forthcoming within a very short time for the full fruition of this programme.

But we Congressmen need not depend upon the pious wishes and intentions of the bureaucracy and those who are interested in maintaining it in power. The real work has to be done by Congressmen with the help of the progressive parties in the country.

## THE PROGRAMME AND CONGRESSMEN.

I shall now examine the various items of the programme in relation to Congressmen.

Items 1 and 2 need no explanation. It will be observed that I have confined these items to the communal part of the recommendations as to which there is and should be, no difference of opinion among us. The vital importance of the work is obvious.

As to untouchability, a great deal has been said but very little work has been done. It should, in my opinion, be the duty of every Congressman to help actively in this work to the best of his ability. Untouchability must be abolished altogether, so far as Congressmen are concerned, and no person who refuses to associate with untouchables as his equals should be permitted to belong to any Congress organisation. The All-India Spinners' Association is doing good work in both directions but it needs further support and its work should be supplemented by lectures on sanitation and formation of village and circle committees to promote co-operation among the villages.

No 6 is the special province of the women of India and I call upon them to offer their services to the Congress.

The campaign against social customs which retard intercourse and national growth is essential for the success of any programme but we have so far paid the least attention to it. The purdah and the other disabilities of women are a curse which we should wipe out without delay. If woman is the better half of man, let us men assist her to do the better part of the work of national uplift. To get rid of purdah and reorganise domestic life no money is wanted, even individuals can and should do their best.

It is impossible to enter into further details in the course of this address and I would suggest that the All-India Congress Committee be empowered to divide itself into a number of sub-committees, each to be presided over by a member of the Working Committee, and to be in charge of one or more of the above items. The actual work will be done by similar sub-committees of the provincial committees who will look for instructions to the sub-committee of the All-India Congress Committee in charge. All other details will be left to the Working Committee.

This is the general programme for all parties to carry out. It is as necessary from their point of view as that of the Congress, and I have reason to believe that they will give their full support. If we all do this work honestly and intensively the goal should be within sight. But if we are unable to work out this programme to the full measure expected whether we retain the support of the other parties or not, for Congressmen non-violent non-co-operation is an obligation they dare not shirk unless there is a better aggressive programme before the Congress. Sirdar Vallabhai Patel and Bardoli have shown us that absolutely peaceful direct action is possible and can be made successful. He has shown what patient work among villagers can do. In your name, I tender my congratulations to the Sirdar and his brave comrades—men as well as women.

## THE OVERSEAS PROBLEM.

We may not forget our countrymen overseas. Though the great work done by Mr. V. S. Sastri has eased the situation to a certain extent in South Africa the position requires considerable watching. The problem in Kenya is growing more and more serious and threatens the very existence of the Indian settlers there, who by the way, went there long before any European and enjoyed the happiest relations with the Africans. In Fiji and British Guiana too the pressure of British exploitation is telling upon our countrymen who have gone there as much as upon the natives of the soil. But without forgetting them the best aid we can render them is in the words of Sir Pherozesha Mehta, to gain our freedom here.

## CONCLUSION.

I have only dealt with what I consider to be the real crux of the present situation and in doing so I have tried to discharge what I conceive to be my duty to the country at this juncture. My views may not be acceptable to all, specially to the

younger men. I quite appreciate their impatience. We need both patience and impatience. Patience with those who differ from us, impatience with ourselves. I have no quarrel with the ideals of the younger men nor with the practical work they have laid out for themselves. I hold with them that all exploitation must cease and all imperialism must go. But the way to do it is a long and dreary one. They know it and have themselves pointed it out. The work before the young and the old is one and the same. Only the mentality is different. Let the younger men by all means preserve their own mentality, but let them not for the sake of the very Motherland they seek to serve, divide the country into more factions and parties than there are already. To the older men I repeat the same advice. Let them both remember the words of wisdom uttered by Mahatma Gandhi and Deshabandhu Chittaranjan Das I have quoted above. The masses want bread. They have no time to make experiments and no use for theories and dogmas imported from abroad.

I have done. You have been patient with me. My humble services for what they are worth are at your disposal. Let us sink our differences. Let us march forward shoulder to shoulder and victory is ours.

#### CONGRESS AND LABOUR.

The following addition was made by Pundit Motilal Nehru in his address to the Congress in dealing with his programme relating to Labour :

"The Congress has, all along, identified itself with the cause of Labour and Congressmen have uniformly co-operated with the leaders of the Labour movement in India in bringing about an improvement in the economic and social conditions of Labour and in supporting its claim for an equal voice with Capital or other interests in the solution of our political and economic problems. The year that will shortly close has, however, been marked by an acute condition of conflict between Labour and Capital in Bombay and elsewhere and the strikes and lock-outs that have arisen in consequence, as well as the unfortunate disturbances that have ensued, have not helped to secure an early and pacific settlement of the disputes between the employers and the employed. The authorities, who have stepped in on behalf of the employers, have not only raised the Communist bogey as an answer to the hungry labourer who fights for a living wages and for the bare decencies of human living, but have resorted to shooting and violence in putting down strikers, which must fill our hearts with shame and sorrow. The Congress can no longer afford to ignore these deplorable happenings and the time has arrived when the Congress should actively intervene and take steps to secure the just demands of Labour and take it upon itself to strengthen their organisation as part of the work of national consolidation."

As soon as Pandit Motilal completed his address, the audience stood up and were preparing to leave the pandal. All appeals to make them resume their seats in order to dispose of one or two items in the agenda were in vain. Eventually Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta announced that the President has adjourned the sitting till the next day afternoon.

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# Proceedings and Resolutions.

*SECOND DAY—30th DECEMBER 1928.*

At four o'clock Pandit Motilal made his entry into the Congress pandal, heralded by the volunteer band like yesterday. After the National Anthem had been played Pandit Jawaharlal read the messages of greeting from organisations and individuals abroad. Almost all the messages wished India complete independence and all such references were received by the audience with loud applause and a voice was heard shouting: "What about the greetings for Dominion Status?"

A delegate from the Punjab block took objection to the messages being read in English and great confusion prevailed for some time.

## PRESIDENT DEPRECATES INTERRUPTIONS.

Pundit Motilal strongly chastised the audience for the exhibition of disorderliness and exhorted them to emulate the example of their Labour brethren, who had held their meeting a couple of hours previously, in the same pandal, at which those Labourers had been quite silent and orderly. He told them that he stood and fought for the rights of other people. He would also stand and fight for his rights. He was their elected President and as such had a right to conduct the Congress meeting in the way he liked. Unfortunately, all people could not understand Urdu and Hindi which the Congress had declared to be the national languages. He, therefore, proposed to so arrange the speeches on every resolution that they would be in every language and he hoped that there would be no exhibition of disorderliness in asking a speaker to speak in a particular language. He would allow each speaker to address in the language in which he could express himself best. If they were so enamoured of Urdu he assured them that he could speak such Urdu as not any of them would be able to understand.

This well-deserved reprimand had its desired effect and there was complete silence thereafter.

Pandit Jawaharlal announced, after reading the greetings from bodies and individuals abroad, that the London Branch of the Indian National Congress, the Nationalists organisation in French Indo-China, the Congress branch of the Portuguese Goa and many other bodies had sent fraternal delegates to this Congress.

He also said: "I have received information that many other messages in addition to those I have read had been sent from Egypt, Palestine and Syria, but since they have not been received I conclude that they have been suppressed."

## M. ROMAIN ROLAND'S EXHORTATION.

Among the messages from abroad was one from M. Romain Rolland, the French author, to the president of the Congress, which says: "The time has come when the enchained Prometheus struggles to free himself on the Himalayas. Prometheus freed himself to remain, whatever may happen, faithful to himself, to his past, to those ideas for which he suffered, to justice, to the universal soul which he has within him as Atman Brahman," to the high mission of humanity which is his true reason for existence. We in the West know too much of the abuses, errors and crimes of monstrous nationalism not to hope that India will escape the murderous route followed by the peoples of Europe and America, that she will raise herself above it and attain a superior status for the future of humanity, when she will realise in her people the harmony of all faiths, the co-operation of all forces and the union of all ideas for the good of all humanity. May today begin an era which will bear in history the name of the Independence of India. This sacred land from which have gone forth the greatest streams of ideas and of civilisations, which have fertilised the ancient Continent, has shown for a century a miraculous power of renewing itself. An uninterrupted succession of geniuses, of whom may I mention in these times of the renaissance the great figure of the precursor Ram Mohan Roy in association with that of the heroic apostle of truth

and love, whom the world venerates, M. K. Gandhi, have forged again the unity of the spirit of India. A band of intrepid workers and of great citizens among whom I mention one whom India mourns today, Lajpat Rai, have made it possible for the nation to catch up the Western giant in his onward march."

### 1. Condolence.

In accordance with the usual custom condolences on the deaths of Lala Lajpat Rai, Hakim Ajmal Khan and Lord Sinha were put to the House from the chair and passed all standing. The following is the text :—

"This Congress records its deep sorrow at the deaths of Hakim Ajmal Khan, Lord Sinha and Lala Lajpat Rai, ex-presidents of the Congress, and Shri Maganlal Gandhi, Shri Gopabandhu Das, Andhraratna Gopalakrishnayya and Shri Anandi Prasad Sinha, and sends its respectful condolences to their families."

### 2. Police Attack on Lalaji.

Sardar Sardul Singh then moved the second resolution, condemning the police attack on Lala Lajpat Rai on the occasion of the Simon Commission's visit at Lahore. The following is the text :—

"This Congress condemns the attack by the Lahore police on Lala Lajpat Rai and other leaders near the railway station, while leading the boycott procession on the arrival of the Simon Commission, as deliberate and unprovoked and believes that the death of Lalaji was accelerated by the injuries he received at the hands of the police."

In moving the resolution the speaker said that Lalaji had fallen as a martyr in the nation's battle for freedom. He wanted to tell the Government that Indians were not going to be cowed down by this show of brutal force. All, who were present on the occasion of the assault on the late Lala Lajpat Rai, saw that he was singled out for being beaten. The Government had been challenged to institute an impartial enquiry into the matter, but they dared not do so because they knew their conscience was not clear. The murder of the police official Mr. Saunders had been connected with Lalaji's death by the Government. "We try to be non-violent. It is our creed and if there is any violence, responsibility for it rests with the Government, who indulged in brutal attacks on helpless crowds in Lahore, Lucknow and Cawnpore. If the Government goes on attacking leaders like this, the necessary result would be the same as Government says has happened in the case of Mr. Saunders."

Mr. Nripendranath Banerjee in seconding the resolution said : "I am compelled to address you in English, however ungrammatical and unidiomatic it may be. But the grammar I know is the grammar of patriotism, and the idiom I know is the idiom of active nationalism. No one has resented the police hooliganism in Lahore more than we in Bengal have done. So far as our creed is concerned it is non-violent, but there is such a thing as action and reaction and on behalf of the youth of Bengal, I give the British Government the timely warning that the time is coming when responsive violence is bound to come." He concluded : "We need not quarrel over the question of Dominion Status and Complete Independence, but let us devise the sanctions. Let us create volunteers who can get killed."

The Hon. Seth Govindas, Jubbulpore, in a long-winded Hindi speech, characterised the police attack on Lala Lajpat Rai as sheer cowardice. He asked them not to waste their time in small squabbles but to concentrate on their work outlined in Mahatma Gandhi's compromise resolution during the ensuing year, so that, when the time came, they could organise non-violent non-co-operation and non-payment of taxation and thus attain Independence.

Dr. Alam (Lahore) supporting the resolution, said :—"If I had not been beaten along with Lalaji I think it is my misfortune that the lathi that hit him did not fall on me. Lala Lajpat Rai had shown to the world how brave people lived and died for a cause. Lalaji's life was spent in struggling for the independence of the country and he met his death in the same way. Although we sorrow for his death we also, at the same time, envy him the manner of his death. The message that emanated from the funeral pier of Lalaji was 'Live in the country's service like this and die in the country's service like this'. The speaker had challenged



the Government in the Punjab Council to institute an independent inquiry into the circumstances of Lalaji's death but the Government had not dared to accept his challenge because its conscience was not clear.

Miss Jyotirmoyee Gangulee then addressed the House in Bengalee, supporting the resolution.

The resolution was then put to vote and carried unanimously and the House adjourned.

### The Labour Demonstration.

Before the Congress met on this day twenty thousand workers and peasants of Lilloah workshop and Behar Kisan Sava broke open the Congress compound to assert their right under the aegis of the Indian National Congress. They first held a meeting in the open space where several leaders including Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru addressed them. But not content with that, the workers under their leaders wanted to hold the meeting in the Congress Pandal, as a result of which the Congress had to be adjourned from 2 P. M. to 4 P. M.

It was circulated some days ago that they would hold a Conference at the Congress pandal and that they would arrange a procession on the maidan near the Ochterloney Monument and proceed to Congressnagar for the purpose.

The Congress authorities, it was said, apprehending trouble in case the crowd block the gates of the Congress pandal issued notice that the Bengal Labour Conference would not be held in the Congress pandal as their assembly would delay the Congress proceedings.

In spite of the notice issued by the Congress authorities the labourers, it was said, assembled on the maidan according to the notice issued by the leaders. The police on receipt of the information arrived at the maidan in a large number with lorry-full of policemen and European Sergeants. When they were organising the procession the Police told them that the procession could not proceed to Congressnagar without the permission of the Congress authorities. Mr. K. C. Mitter, Mr. Godbole and other labour leaders immediately proceeded to the Deshbandhunagar and told the Police that they would bring necessary order before the processionists started for Deshbandhunagar. On arrival at the Deshbandhunagar Mr. Mitter and other labour leaders, it was said, saw some of the Congress authorities and asked their permission to come to the Deshbandhunagar. They, it was said, told the labour leaders that the Congress would meet at 2 o'clock and it would be impossible for them to lend the pandal to the organisers of the Labour Conference.

After some discussions it was settled that they would simply enter the compound of the Congress and hold their meeting for only two hours.

The party then came back to the Calcutta maidan and told the Police men that they had got the necessary orders to enter the Congressnagar with the procession.

The Police on receipt of the information from the leaders of the Labour party allowed the procession to pass. A two-mile long procession was arranged and the processionists then started carrying different mottos and flags to the Deshbandhunagar through the Corporation Street and the Lower Circular Road escorted by Police all the time. The processionists were carrying the following mottos: "You don't lose any thing but chains" "Long live Independent Republic in India" and various other mottos.

When the procession reached Deshbandhunagar all the roads leading to the pandal were blocked. The Volunteers came out in a large number and asked the processionists not to block the traffic. The labourers proceeded straight to the pandal gate. The Volunteers tried their level best to check the crowd but failed and the big crowd made a dash to the main gate. Great confusion prevailed for the time being and the Volunteers from all sides came to the place and barricaded the road with their lathis. There was a clash between the parties. In the melee some of the Volunteers and the members of the processionists were more or less injured. The situation took a serious turn. The struggle continued for some time and the Congress authorities on receipt of the information immediately came to the place of occurrence.

Pandit Motilal Nehru, Pandit Malaviya and Mr. Sen Gupta who were in the Convention pandal came out and decided to open the gates. Meanwhile, Pandit Jawaharlal and Mr. Monilal Kothari who were on horseback approached the crowd and told them that they could hold the meeting in the Congress grounds. The crowd was then tactfully managed and let in the Congress grounds and they assembled at the foot of the national flag staff. They were addressed by Messrs Joglekar, Monilal Kothari and others.

They were then allowed to enter the pandal. They then entered the pandal and silently took their seats. A mass meeting was held presided over by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

Several labour leaders including Messrs. K. C. Mitter, Sibnath Banerjee of Bengal, Messrs. Nimbkar and Joglekar and others addressed the meeting. The Labour Leaders described how they were assaulted in their attempt to enter the Pandal by the volunteers in charge and cries of shame echoed and re-echoed the whole House.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru then addressed the gathering, thanked them for the peaceful behaviour they had shown and reminded them that they had been allowed to hold their meeting for only an hour after which they must quit the Pandal as peacefully as they entered.

Messrs. K. C. Mitra, Bankim Chandra Mukherjee and others addressing the meeting said that although they expected a lakh of people to assemble, only about 20,000 had assembled. This was due to the fact that they had only Rs. 100 at their disposal and hence they could not organise it properly. Besides they had met at the Pandal with the special permission of the President to finish their deliberations within one hour. It was therefore not possible to pass all resolutions. The labourers were asked to assemble at a meeting in the afternoon to be held at the Halliday Park organised by the Bihar Kisan Sabha where they would discuss the other matters.

Pandit Motilal Nehru, President of the Congress, said that he was pleased to see the labourers and expressed his full sympathy with them. He had already made a reference to the labour question in his address and he assured them that so long as he was the President of the Congress, he would look after their interests. Besides, he had allowed their leader Mr. K. C. Mitra to take part in the Congress proceedings on behalf of Labour.

In conclusion he asked them to disperse peacefully within the time allotted to them by him, as the Congress would sit shortly after.

The following resolution to the effect were adopted: "The mass meeting of the workers and peasants from all industries declare that we, the workers and peasants of the land shall not rest content till complete independence is established and all exploitation from capitalism and Imperialism cease. We do call upon the National Congress to keep that goal before them and organise the national forces for that purpose".

At this stage it was stated that Mahatma Gandhi was waiting outside to address the labourers whereupon they again silently came outside and gathered there. Mahatmaji then addressed them and in pursuance to his request, the labourers walked outside.

A large number of police force accompanied the labourers and waited outside the Congress Pandal.

### THIRD DAY.—31st DECEMBER 1928.

The third day's sitting of the Congress commenced punctually at 2 p.m. amidst scenes of great enthusiasm. Pandit Motilal was led to the dais in a procession and the national band played as the procession entered the pandal. The principal business of the day was disposing of resolutions including the one standing in the name of Mahatma Gandhi regarding Dominion Status.

After "Bande Mataram" and Sm. Sarala Devi's "Namo Hindusthan" songs which breathed the atmosphere of unity and brotherhood were sung Pandit Jawaharlal entered the rostrum and asked on behalf of the President that time should be limited and the mover of the main resolution Mahatma Gandhi would be given half an hour, other speakers less time with a view to expedite matters.

### 3. Affiliations.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru next moved the following resolution :

"This Congress recognises the London branch of the Indian National Congress and authorises it to form subordinate committees in Great Britain.

"The Congress further recognises the New York Branch of the Congress and authorises it to form subordinate committees in America.

"The Congress also recognises the committee of the Congress formed in Goa.

"The Working Committee is authorised to determine the number of delegates and the quota of subscriptions to be paid by these branches and the rights of such delegates to take part in the meetings of the Subjects Committee of the Congress.

"The Congress further authorises the Working Committee to consider the application of the committee formed in Kobe, Japan, for affiliation and to recognise it after due enquiries if it so desires.

Lala Girdhari Lal having seconded, the resolution was carried unanimously.

### 4. Foreign Department.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru next moved :

"This Congress, being of opinion that the struggle of Indian people for freedom is a part of the general world struggle against Imperialism and its manifestations, considers it desirable that India should develop contacts with other countries and peoples who also suffer under Imperialism and desire to combat it. The Congress therefore calls upon the All-India Congress Committee to develop such contacts and to open a foreign department in this behalf."

In moving the resolution Pandit Jawaharlal said the those who heard the mess ages read yesterday from the oppressed people and other anti-imperialist organisation must have felt the necessity of establishing such contacts with countries outside India in the interest of common fellowship in the struggle for freedom.

Mr. Harisarvottam Rao in seconding the resolution said that the present step was necessary to combine all oppressed people so that the oppressors might be brought to their senses. The resolution was carried unanimously.

### 5. Pan-Asiatic Federation.

Mr. S. Satyamurthi then moved the following resolution :—

"This Congress directs the Working Committee to correspond with the leaders and representatives of other Asiatic nations to take other steps to summon the first session of a Pan-Asiatic Federation in 1930 in India."

In moving the resolution Mr. Satyamurthi said that this was one of the contributions to Indian political thought made by Deshabandhu C. R. Das. This resolution wanted the people of India to think, speak and act in the term of independence. They felt that the time had come when India should no longer confine her activities within her own borders but should stretch forth her hand of fellowship and ally herself with other nations.

Proceeding he referred to China, Ceylon, Persia, Tibet and Japan and said that they would be glad to co-operate with India. Maintaining that this resolution was a practical proposition he concluded that time has come for Asia to throw off the yoke of Imperialism and stand by her own. As an Indian I see nothing less than this so far as Government of India is concerned that she should be the leader of renaissance Asia which would give to the world what Europe cannot give, what Europe has failed to give, namely peace on earth and good-will to all men.

### 6. China.

The following resolutions were then moved from the chair and carried unanimously :—

"This Congress sends its warmest greetings and its hearty congratulations to the people of China on their having attained their full and complete freedom and nationhood and their having ended the era of foreign domination in their country."

### 7. Greetings to Egypt.

"This Congress sends its warmest greetings to the peoples of Egypt, Syria Palestine and Iraq and its assurances of full sympathy with them in their struggle for emancipation from the grip of Western Imperialism which is, in the opinion of the Congress, a great menace to India's struggle for freedom."

### 8. Next World Congress.

"This Congress welcomes the Second World Congress of the League against Imperialism to be held next year and authorises the Working Committee to appoint a representative on behalf of the Congress."

### 9. War Danger.

Dr. Ansari then moved :—

"This Congress reiterates the War Danger resolution of the Madras Sessions of the Congress, and wishes to declare that the present Government of India in no way represents the people of India and their policy has been traditionally guided by consideration of holding India under subjection and not of protecting her frontiers. The people of India have no quarrel with the neighbouring states or the other nations of the world and they will not permit themselves to be exploited by England to further her imperialist aims."

Dr. Ansari moving the resolution said :

Gentlemen, you know that the army which is kept in India in the name of guarding the country against foreign menace is really the army of occupation. It is used for the suppression of freedom of the people. I need not remind you of the numerous instances in which the army has been called to fire on unarmed citizens. There is concentration of large army in the frontier although we have no quarrel either with Afganistan or with Russia. We must not allow our man-power to be utilised in subjugating other nations. We uttered the warning last year and we now renew it in this resolution. Repression has again been started in the Panjab. I have not the least doubt that active repression will be extended to all over India. I commend to you this resolution which you should not only carry but also put forth every ounce of your energy to carry it out.

Seconding the resolution Dr. Kitchlew said : This resolution marks an important declaration of policy. It was a warning to the Government that the people of this country do not want any quarrel with any other nation of the world. The resolution was also the declaration that the Government was not the representative of the people of this country. By the resolution the Congress also conveyed the message to other countries that India wanted to live in amity with her neighbours. In the case of declaration of war the country should not only reaffirm its resolution but carry active propaganda against men enlisting in the army and also call on the people to refuse to the Government, not only men but also money and supplies. As regards the repression in the Punjab Dr. Kitchlew said that men and women of the Punjab were ready to accept the challenge and Government might throw open jails which could not contain men and women of the Panjab who were ready to fill the jails.

Sardar Sardul Singh further supporting the resolution said that it was a matter of great regret that for pittances of 18 and 20 rupees Sepoys of India should allow themselves to be used for oppression of other people.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

### 10. Ban on Government levees.

Seth Govindadas of Jubbulpore moved :

"This Congress is of opinion that it is contrary to the spirit of national struggle for freedom and derogatory to national dignity for Congressmen to participate in any way in the functions meant to consolidate foreign rule and do honour to alien rulers in India and their officials. The Congress, therefore, reiterates the advice to the people in general and congressmen in particular that they should abstain from attending Government levees, durbars and all other official and semi-official functions held by Government officials or in their honour."

The mover said that humiliating as the practice was every self-respecting Indian should boycott such functions.

Mr. Santosh Kumar Bose of Bengal seconding the resolution said that they could not attend such functions inconsistent with national dignity and with the badge of slavery on them.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

### 11. Boycott of British Goods.

Mr. Viswanatham of Andhra moved :—

"That the Congress should vigorously carry on propaganda for boycotting all foreign cloth in general and British goods in particular."

Commending the resolution to the Congress for acceptance Mr. Viswanatham said that the boycott of British goods was one of the effective weapons of non-violent non-co-operation. He repudiated the charge that boycott of British goods depended for its development on the cultivation of the spirit of hatred.

Mr. Rajkumar Chakravarti seconded the resolution. To the people pledged to non-violence boycott of British goods was not a potent weapon. It was only a fitting answer to the Simon Commission and to the police.

At this stage Mahatma Gandhi entered the pandal and received a great ovation. After the resolution had been further supported by Mr. Trivedi, Mr. Akhil Chandra Dutta raised his voice against it. He said he did not believe in paper resolutions. While even among congressmen there were many who still wore British cloth it was impossible to exhort other people to boycott all British goods.

The resolution was declared carried by an overwhelming majority.

## 12. Bardoli Satyagraha.

The following resolution regarding Bardoli was then put from the chair and carried unanimously :—

"This Congress congratulates Sri Vallabhvhai Patel and the people of Bardoli on the great success achieved by them in their campaign of non-violent resistance to the unjust enhancement of land revenue by Government."

After this came the resolution of the All-Parties Committee Report, which was being eagerly awaited and on which the attention of the Congress was rivetted.

## 13. The All-Parties Committee Report.

Mahatma Gandhi ascended the rostrum amid repeated applause and cries of "Vande Mataram" and taking his seat on the table moved the resolution passed by a majority at the Subjects Committee. The following is the text of the resolution :—

"This Congress, having considered the constitution recommended by the All-Parties' Committee Report, welcomes it as a great contribution towards the solution of India's political and communal problems, and congratulates the Committee on the virtual unanimity of its recommendations and, whilst adhering to the resolution relating to complete independence passed at the Madras Congress approves of the constitution drawn up by the Committee as a great step in political advance, especially as it represents the largest measure of agreement attained among the important parties in the country."

"Subject to the exigencies of the political situation this Congress will adopt the constitution in its entirety if it is accepted by the British Parliament on or before December 31, 1929, but in the event of its non-acceptance by that date or its earlier rejection, Congress will organise a non-violent non-co-operation by advising the country to refuse taxation in such other manner as may be decided upon. Consistently with the above nothing in this resolution shall interfere with the carrying on, in the name of the Congress, of the propaganda for complete independence."

Mahatma Gandhi in moving the resolution delivered a short speech in Hindi. As the loud speakers failed to work, his speech could not be heard and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru repeated his speech sentence by sentence.

Mahatmaji in the course of his speech said that after due consideration and carefully judging the whole situation he was going to move the resolution before the house. The younger group in the house were eager for complete independence. But he advised the people both young and old to approve of the constitution which has been drafted by the Nehru Committee and work it out during the next 12 months. If it was accepted by the British Parliament by that period well and good. In case of non-acceptance before December 31st 1929 the Congress would organise a campaign of non-violent non-co-operation by advising the country to refuse taxation and in such other manner as would be decided by the people. Before that period, said Mahatma Gandhi, nothing would interfere with the carrying on, in the name of the Congress, of the propaganda for complete independence.

In conclusion Mahatmaji asked the audience to consider the whole situation before they vote for the resolution which he was proposing. He reminded the

house that they should not vote for the resolution because he was moving the resolution.

Dr. Ansari, in seconding the resolution moved by Mahatma Gandhi, said that he felt himself highly fortunate and honoured in seconding the resolution moved by Mahatma Gandhi.

In Madras last year complete independence was adopted at one session which was held there under his presidency and the people could easily understand his present state of mind in seconding the resolution. But after thoroughly discussing on the constitution as drafted by the Nehru Committee for the last 3 or 4 months he was of opinion that they should work out the constitution during the next 12 months as drafted in the report before they would adopt the resolution of complete independence.

Proceeding, Dr. Ansari said that he knew that his younger brethren in the Congress would be disheartened if this resolution was adopted. But he must advise his young friends, who were for complete independence, to get themselves prepared for it. In the meantime it would be better for all of them, young and old, to work out the constitution as drafted by the Committee.

In conclusion he appealed to the younger brethren not to raise any opposition in the question. If the constitution was not accepted by the Parliament before December 31, 1929 the whole nation would declare non-violent non-co-operation.

#### Sj. Subhas Ch. Bose's Amendment

Sj. Subhas Ch. Bose then moved the following amendment :—

"The Congress adheres to the decision of the Madras Congress declaring complete independence to be the goal of the Indian people and is of opinion that there can be no true freedom till British connection is severed."

"This Congress accepts the recommendations of the Nehru Committee as agreed to by the Lucknow All-Parties' Conference for settlement of communal differences."

"This Congress congratulates the Nehru Committee on their patriotic labours and while it does not accept dominion status as the basis of the recommended constitution is of opinion that other recommendations contained in the report constitute a great step towards political advance and without committing itself to every detail generally approves of them."

Moving his amendment Sj. Subhas Chandra Bose said :—

I am sorry that I have to rise to move an amendment to a resolution moved by Mahatma Gandhi and which has the support of some, if not many of our elder leaders. The fact that I rise to-day to move the amendment is a clear indication of a cleavage, the fundamental cleavage between the elder school and the new school of thought in the Congress. (Applause).

I have been asked by my friends as to why I, being signatory to the Nehru Report, have stood up to speak for independence. I would only refer to the statement made in the body of the report where it is said that the principles of the constitution which we have submitted in the report can be applied in all the entirety to a constitution of independence. I do not think that in moving this amendment my action can be construed as in any way inconsistent.

There is another matter to which I shall refer by way of personal explanation. You are aware that in private conversations and elsewhere I said that I do not desire to stand in the way of elder leaders. The reason why I did so was that at that time I did not feel prepared to accept the responsibility of the consequences of a division in this house in case our amendment was accepted. To-day I feel prepared to accept the consequences and to face the issue till the end if my amendment is accepted. There are certain incidents which have happened in the meantime which have made me somewhat alter my previous views. You might remember that even when I could I did not wish to stand in the way of our leaders. I made it perfectly clear that I do not accept the compromise resolution. You are aware that in the meantime the Bengal delegates, or at least, the majority of them, assembled and resolved to have this amendment moved on their behalf and that they were prepared to accept the vote of the House whatever the consequences might be. Even if I did not stand here to-day to move the amend.

ment I can assure you that some other members would have stood up to do that on their behalf.

There is another fact. And that is the decision of the Independence for India League by an overwhelming majority to support the amendment and to accept the vote of the House, whatever it might be.

We who feel it our duty to move or support the amendment feel very sincerely that the time is so momentous that India should express herself in a clear and unambiguous manner as to what she feels on the issue of Dominion Status vs. Independence controversy. I have told our leaders that after the death of Lala Lajpat Rai and the happenings at Lucknow and Cawnpore and the speech of H. E. the Viceroy, we would expect the Congress to take up a bold attitude, which would fit in with an attitude of self-respect. (Applause). Instead of that, we find that the Madras Resolution was to be lowered in some measure. We feel and we say that we are not prepared to lower the flag of Independence even for one single day. Whether we win or lose in this House does not concern us, is not a matter of concern so far as the younger generation is concerned. For they have accepted the responsibility of making India free. We want our leaders, we love them, we revere them but at the same time we want them to keep abreast of the time. I have also told them that I and Pandit Jawaharlal are regarded as moderate among the extremists and if the elder leaders are not prepared to compromise even with these moderates, then the breach between the old and the new will be irreparable. A new consciousness has dawned upon the youth of the country. They are no longer prepared to follow blindfold. They have realised that they are the heirs of the future, that it is for them to make India free and with this new consciousness they are preparing themselves for the arduous task that awaits them.

There is one other argument which appeals to me strongly. And that is the international situation. You should remember that after the Madras Resolution India has got a new status in international politics. I am afraid if this resolution was passed, then we shall lose at least a part, if not much of the prestige that we have acquired after the Madras Congress. You may be aware that after that we have received messages from far and distant part of the world. The question now is, are we to go back upon the decision we took up at Madras? Or are we to go ahead? Are we to respond in a befitting manner to the attitude of the government? And what has been that attitude? We have the lamentable death of Lalaji, and the regrettable happenings at Lucknow and Cawnpore. After all these, do we not feel called upon to take up a defiant and bold attitude?

I should like to put one straight question. In the main resolution you have given twelve months' time to the British government. Can you lay your hands on your breasts and say that there is a reasonable chance of getting Dominion Status within the period? (Cries of No). I ask you in all seriousness, can you believe that there is that reasonable chance of getting Dominion Status? Pandit Motilal has made it clear in his speech that he does not believe so. Then, why are we going to lower down the flag for these twelve months? Why not say, we have lost the last vestige of faith in the British Government and that we are going to take a bold stand.

You can say, what do we gain by this resolution of Independence? I say, we develop a new mentality. After all, what is the fundamental cause of our political degradation? That is the question of mentality and if you want to overcome the slave mentality, you will do so by encouraging our countrymen to stand for full and complete independence. I go further and say, assuming that we do not follow it up by action, but by preaching the gospel honestly and placing the goal of independence before our countrymen, we shall bring up a new generation.

But I tell you we are not going to sit down with folded hands. I have already said that the younger generation realise their responsibility and they are prepared for their task. We shall devise our own programme and work it out according to the best of our ability so that there is no danger that our resolution will be thrown into the waste paper basket.

There is another matter to which I shall refer before I sit down. You know that all events show that another world war is imminent. I say this for two

reasons ; the first reason is that the causes which contribute to war are present in different parts of the world. The settlement brought about by the Treaty of Versailles has not satisfied the national aspirations of all people. It has not satisfied the people of Italy, the Balkans, Russia, Austria-Hungary and so on. Then there is the other reason. We have the Asiatic situation. We have the combination of the capitalistic countries against Soviet Russia. These factors tend to a world war. Then there is the race for armaments. I tell you that this talk of disarmament is a huge farce. The fact is all these countries which are free are working for another war. If India is to be on the alert, we must create a new mentality, a mentality that will say that we want a complete independence. This can only be done by proclaiming the ideal in clear and unequivocal manner.

I do not think we can wait to lose even a single moment. So far as Bengal is concerned, you are aware that since the dawn of the national movement in this country, we have always interpreted freedom as complete and full independence. We have never interpreted it in terms of dominion status. After so many of our countrymen had laid down their lives, after our poets had preached the gospel, we have understood freedom as full and complete independence. The talk of dominion status does not make the slightest appeal to our countrymen, to the younger generation who are growing up and they should remember that after all it is the younger generation who are the heirs of the future.

In conclusion, I wish to make a final appeal. I do not think it will mean the slightest disrespect to our leaders if we accept the amendment. Respect and love, admiration and adoration for leaders is one thing but respect for principle is another thing. Accept my resolution and inspire the younger generation with a new consciousness. (Loud and prolonged applause).

Mr. SATYAMURTHI seconding the amendment said that there had been a lot of casuistry as to the meaning of the word 'Independence', and the meaning of the word, 'goal'. He maintained that the goal did not mean remote or distant but immediate. They further impressed in the amended resolution that there could be no true freedom till British connexion was severed. This proposition he would support from two grounds. The first was that the British rule in India for the last two centuries meant the ruthless exploitation of the masses of India and so far as he was concerned, he would like to see India free from the bondage of Great Britain. He did not want to tell Great Britain in advance that they would remain connected with her in any circumstances. Besides, he had the high authority of Pandit Motilal Nehru who sent a cable congratulating the Congress after it had adopted the resolution of Independence at Madras. The other merit of the amended resolution was that it whole-heartedly supported the communal settlement contained in the Nehru report. He believed that the most valuable contribution of that document was the solution of communal problems. The Moslem League might reject it to-day and other similar organisations might reject that solution to-day, but more or less, on these lines with slight amendments here and there, he was convinced, a true and permanent settlement of the problem would be reached. Therefore, this amendment expected not only for the present but for all time to come that this settlement would be adhered to. But Mahatmaji's resolution placed it along with their demand for Dominion Status. If that was rejected, the whole labour was wasted. But their amendment made it clear that the Nehru report might be adopted in parts, such as, the Moslem League might say that they accepted the communal settlement in all respects except that they would demand one third of the seats in the Central Legislature. That was the value of this amended resolution.

This resolution further stated that they did not accept Dominion Status and that was a clear and unambiguous declaration of their position. He pointed out that both at Lucknow and at Delhi nowhere was the position taken up that others could not go on with their goal of independence. But in Calcutta the table had been turned. He asked the House to take up the position which the Nehru Committee so consistently took up until the Calcutta Congress. The onus of proof was upon those, he maintained, who wanted to go back upon the Delhi resolution and not



upon those who wanted to be consistent with that resolution. Because the distinguished authors of the report had said that the recommendations could be applied in their entirety in a constitution based on independence.

Answering the criticism that Dominion Status meant Independence, Mr. Satyamurthi proceeded on the authority of Professor Keith that it did not mean the one and the same thing. Apart from that, he strongly objected on the part of the Congress in putting forward a claim of Dominion Status. What would that mean?

"The people of India have not yet accepted the conquest of Englishmen as a moral fact. We have submitted to it because we are weak. That was what Lok. Tilak meant when he said that Swaraj is our birthright and we must have it. If you agree to rest content with Dominion Status, it takes away the greatest sanction behind our demand for freedom. (Applause)."

"As a practical man I suggest that India cannot have Dominion Status either from the point of view of England or from the point of view of India, because the mere size of our population will swamp away the Commonwealth. We have nothing in common with Great Britain, either in race or religion, in tradition or in culture. Do you want your future generation, the posterity to be tied down under the Anglo-Saxons? That is for you to answer. So far as I am concerned, as I said, the destiny I conceive for my country is that she should be the leader of Asia, spiritually, morally and politically, and as such, I have nothing to do with Dominion Status at all." (Applause).

"Lastly I believe that India cannot fulfil herself under Dominion Status. I believe that India has a message to deliver to the world, has got to make a contribution to the culture of the world. And I believe she cannot do that if she ties herself to the foretails of Great Britain."

Moreover, they had no right, concluded Mr. Satyamurthi, to check the onward progress of a nation. They could not say, 'thus far and no further'. Independence was the only goal of India and so long as that goal was not reached India could never come to her own. If they lowered down the flag raised at Madras directly or indirectly, making conditional or not, he cautioned them that they would make themselves the laughing-stock of all. The Madras resolution stood to-day as the declaration of the wish of the nation. What had happened in the meantime between Madras and Calcutta to lower down the flag?

Further they should note that Independence caught the imagination of the people and of the masses. Dominion Status was a mere lawyer's phrase and was not to confuse the minds of the masses. What they wanted was not transference of power from one bureaucracy to another, but they wanted peace on earth and good-will to all men. (Loud Cheers).

#### DR. BESANT'S AMENDMENT.

Dr. Besant moved an amendment for the deletion of the words "whilst adhering to the resolution relating to independence passed at the Madras Congress" in the original resolution. Dr. Besant said if the Congress rejected Dominion Status the only logical course was to reject the Nehru report, (cries of no no).

Dr. Besant.—It is only a bare statement of fact.

Owing to the failure of louds speakers and the confusion that followed Dr. Besant could not be heard by the pressmen.

#### MR. NIMBKAR'S AMENDMENT.

Mr. Nimbkar then moved the amendment which runs thus :

"This Congress having considered the constitution recommended by the All-Parties Committee report is of opinion that it is totally unsatisfactory and unacceptable for the following principal reason : (1) that it allows the bourgeoisie to compromise with British imperialism by establishing the so-called Dominion Status which involves safeguards of the vested interests, land-owning, feudal and capitalists and sacrifice of the interest of the masses. (2) That by recognising the titles of the princes it proposes to perpetuate tyrannical and democratic system of Government entailing unchecked exploitations of the masses which exists in the native states.

(3) That it safeguards and acquiesces in exploitation of human and material resources of India by foreign capital. (4) That it guarantees and allows enjoyment of all titles to private and personal property acquired by questionable means which perpetuates exploitation of the masses. (5) That it guarantees payment of all foreign state debt. (6) That it proposes to place armed forces of the country under the control of a committee which will at first consist partly of British officers thus depriving the people of their inherent right of self-defence (7) That it proposes to give executive powers and power of veto to the Governor General and the Governor nominated by the King, thus depriving the Indian people of their sovereign rights.

"This Congress therefore declares that its aim is the attainment of complete national independence based on political, economic and social equality entirely free from imperialism".

Mr. Nimbkar said :—As a practical man I believe it easier to achieve independence than to attain Dominion Status. Speaking for the masses let me tell you that they do not want your paper constitution, they want food to eat, clothes to wear and shelter to lie. The masses of this country are subjected to-day to fourfold exploitation of British Imperialists, Indian princes, Indian landlords and Indian capitalists.

#### OTHER AMENDMENTS.

Syed Majid Bux next moved an amendment to add the following before para one of the original resolution :—"This Congress reiterates that the goal of the Congress is attainment by stages of complete political independence as determined by the Madras Congress." He also moved for the deletion of "and communal" from the first para of the original resolution and insert the following : "provided that representation in legislative bodies be secured not on communal basis, but according to numerical strength of the adult population of the workers and the classes" after the word "problems" in para one of the original resolution. He also moved for the deletion of the words at the end of para one from "specially as it represents etc. to in the country" at the end of the para.

Mr. Lalchand JAGTIANI next moved for the deletion of the words "organise a campaign of non-violent non-co-operation etc. and insertion of the words "decide upon taking action both direct and indirect as it may deem necessary having regard to the circumstances prevailing in the country at that juncture".

Mr. Jogendra Nath GUHA moved for the deletion of the whole of the para two beginning from the words "subject to exigencies etc. to be decided upon in the original resolution.

Sj. Syamsundar CHAKRAVARTI in moving a minor amendment to Mahatma Gandhi's resolution said that the time for talk was past and the time for work had arrived. The test of ideal was in work and not in words. He recommended the main resolution with the alterations as suggested. They must feel that the compromise resolution was meant for establishing unity for the emancipation of the country.

Mr. Basir AHMED (Tamil Nadu) moving an amendment for the omission of the words "communal" in the first para of Mahatmaji's resolution said that the Nehru Report had contributed nothing to the solution of communal problem. The Mussalmans wanted a federal state which alone could give unity.

Swami Kumaranand of Ajmere moved another amendment but the audience refused to hear him.

There was then the general discussion on the resolution and amendments.

Dr. Murarilal supported Mahatmaji.

Mr. Ashadulla Seajji supported Sj. Subhas Chandra Bose. At 6-55 the President announced the adjournment of the house till 8-30 p. m. when votes on the amendments and Mahatmaji's resolution will be taken.

#### Night session of the Congress.

Intense excitement prevailed when the Congress re-assembled at 9 P. M. Mr. Siva Prosad GUPTA opposing Mahatma Gandhi's resolution said that the substituted resolution was not solely prepared by Mahatmaji, and there

should be no misunderstanding on the point. "Decide whether you want complete independence or Dominion Status. Those who think that this resolution would bring together all moderates and loyalists round the Congress flag are mistaken. They were not with the nation in the height of the non-co-operation movement in 1919 and 1920."

Mr. Gupta emphasised that principles should be worshipped and not personalities. In the war for freedom, a son had a right to fight against his father. He recalled the preaching of Lord Krishna and exhorted all to march as soldiers of freedom and to fight for independence till victory was achieved.

Concluding he said, "If you have to sacrifice your blood, shed it only for full and complete independence and not for Dominion Status. Remember, no nation ever grants freedom to another out of his own will."

Supporting Mahatmaji, Mr. Harisarvottama RAI recalled the teaching of Lok Tilak that "Swaraj is our birthright and we shall die for it." That was for which Deshbandhu lived and died. It was for this that Lalaji lived and died. That is for which Mahatmaji and Panditji stand. After all these, who can say that Mahatmaji has lowered down the flag of Independence (cries of shame and counter-cheers from two sections of the House). It was no use talking of big words. They must follow a man of action and Gandhiji is a man of action.

"I know that there is great emotion surcharging the minds of the younger generation. It is regrettable that the bureaucracy was exasperating them. If there was any blood-shed in the country, if there was revolution in the country, the responsibility will be on the head of the British Government and not on the head of those who even commit violence.

"There is Mahatmaji ready to lead us and under political circumstances of a peculiar nature he has come forward to sponsor the resolution which stands for the Madras resolution and for the Nehru report which is the outcome of the Madras Congress resolution. Destroy the political side of the Nehru report and you destroy the whole. (Cries of no, no from a section of the house).

"Situated as we are," concluded Mr. Harisarvottama, "and trying to wrest our right from the British Government inch by inch, we are concentrating all the strengths of the country, and not its weakness, by mobilising all our resources and bringing together the different parties in the country.

"Talking of Dominion Status does not mean the lowering of the flag. Men who have not the courage to carry on the propaganda against the Simon Commission (cries of shame and counter-cheers greeted the speaker), let them not talk of big things. Let them sacrifice their all against the Simon Commission and we shall have our right."

Mr. JUGLEKAR remarked that the Nehru Report perpetuated that system of exploitation under which 99 per cent of the people of the country were labouring at the present moment. Should they support such a scheme, simply because they had been asked by their revered leaders to do so? Should they do that when their honour was under trial? The issue before them was: "are you going to stand by the highest ideal of your life, or are you going to sell your country for the reverence of some individuals who have rendered greatest service for us in the past? Panditji and Gandhiji have given the mightiest services to the country in the past and are great men; but I say, country is greater than them. No one who has got a conscience should vote for Mahatmaji. We are under British subjection, but that is against our will. But by accepting Dominion Status, we are going to sign our death-warrant. Let them remember this and vote accordingly."

Supporting the amendment Mr. Sarat Chandra BOSE of Bengal remarked that the question before the House was not merely a question of sentiment. It was a question whether they, in the Indian National Congress, were prepared to lower the flag raised at Madras. (Applause). It was a question of cold reasoning and not a question of sentiment.

A voice : Give up your practice first ?

Proceeding Mr. Bose recalled the Presidential speech where Panditji had said that though they had striven honestly all these years, there was no gesture from the other side. All the indications Panditji had said, were on the contrary. That

being so, Mr. Bose asked, what had happened during the last two days since the delivery of the Presidential address? (Cries of Mahatmaji greeted the speaker from a section of the House).

Continuing Mr. Bose emphasised that so far as unity in the Congress ranks was concerned it was there, for every Congressman was zealous in upholding the ideal of independence. It was only when they talked of Dominion Status, that there was disagreement in their ranks.

The next point was, should the movement for independence receive a set-back even for an hour, not to speak for one year? He emphasised that the movement for independence was a movement which could not be kept in suspension even for a single hour. If it received a set-back, it would bring back many into their field with broken heart. Finally, Mr. Bose appealed to all to combine their forces to preach the gospel of independence. (Cheers and counter-cheers).

At this stage, the demand for closure was moved, but the President ruled that there would be some other speeches before he would put the closure motion to vote.

Pandit Jawaharlal NEHRU supporting Mr. Subhas Bose in course of a speech in Hindi said that to demand for Dominion Status was nothing but to be beggars at the door of the British Government. The issue before them was a grave one. Not only their countrymen outside but the whole world at large were waiting for their verdict. Let them give that verdict in a balanced mind and in a balanced judgment. (Applause).

Mr. Govinda Ballav Pant supported M. Gandhi. Mr. Sainam of Cochin state remarked that Dominion Status would not improve the lot of the state subjects. Nothing but complete independence would satisfy them.

#### THE MAHATMA'S REPLY.

At twenty minutes past ten, Mahatma Gandhi rose amidst deafening cries to reply to the debate. Speaking in Hindi he urged all to remain silent so that they might hear what he had got to say.

Replying to the debate, Mahatma Gandhi said that his remarks were principally addressed to young Bengal and if they considered for one moment that a mere Gujrati could not understand young Bengal, then I say that Young Bengal would commit a most serious blunder.

Two or three voices cried : No, No.

Mahatma : I will ask you not to interrupt me when I am endeavouring to address a few words to you, as a fellow-worker of yours. If however you want to interrupt me, I shall certainly retire and not address you. If on the other hand you want to listen to me, then listen to me in perfect silence. I want to make it absolutely clear that if you are wise, you will dismiss from your minds the bogey of Independence vs. Dominion Status. There is no opposition between Dominion Status and Independence. I do not want a Dominion Status that will interfere with my fullest growth, with my independence. These words, I suggest, are misleading. I would therefore suggest a better method. That is independence whereby we can grow to our fullest height. We are the architects of our own destiny and I suggest that the architects of the Nehru Report are your own countrymen appointed by you. There is no hand on the part of the Government in the framing of this document. This document owes its origin to the Madras Congress and it is through the Madras Congress that this committee was appointed and it is this report by which I ask you to stand for the time being. The question has been agitating my mind since yesterday afternoon when I heard that there was going to be seriously put forward an amendment to this resolution on behalf of those who, I thought, were a party to the resolution that I moved.

The resolution that I have submitted to this House is the direct result of a compromise. The resolution that I originally framed, you have not seen. And even the one that was printed and moved in the Subjects Committee was also in a way the result of informal compromise or some kind of understanding, whatever language you might wish to use. That resolution was not framed by me only ; there were many heads behind that. There was an attempt to placate as

many parties as it was possible to placate. That resolution was discussed by various men, men who were supposed to represent different parties. I do not want to suggest that you are bound by that resolution but I do want to say that those who were supposed to be behind that resolution were honour bound to support it.

If anybody runs away with the idea that I am here appealing to sentiment, he is in the wrong. You can appeal to one's sense of honour and I am proud of having made my appeal to that sense of honour. I suggest that if those who were behind this compromise subsequently discovered that they have committed a blunder and that they must clear their position before the world and say that they are penitent for what they had done previously. I suggest that penitence is made of sterner stuff. It is not made by amendments. There are other drastic steps to be taken. If those who were behind this compromise consider that they have committed no such blunder but have committed only tactical blunder or a blunder that involves displeasure of some party, then I suggest that it is their bounden duty to swallow that blunder and abide by that compromise. If you have not got that sense of honour and if after giving a word of honour you are not sure that that should be kept at any cost, then I say that you will not be able to make this nation free.

You may take the name of Independence on your lips just as the Moslem utter the name of Allah or a pious Hindu utters the name of Krishna or Ram, but all that muttering will be an utterly empty formula if there is no honour behind it.

If you are not prepared to stand by your own word, where will Independence be? Independence is after all a thing made of sterner stuff. It is not made by wriggling of words. I suggest that if you want to vindicate the honour of this nation, because the Viceroy insults us or the president of a European Chamber insults us, we say, we want our independence because we want to vindicate our honour,—then you are dragging independence into mire. Do not imagine for a moment that I am trying to snatch a vote from you. Believe me there is no such thing behind my mind.

I would far rather suffer defeat at the hands of youngmen but I am zealous of their honour. If you, youngmen, who are behind this amendment understand the significance of the message I am delivering to you, you may say for the present that you have committed a blunder but that you want to abide by that compromise because our leaders have entered into compromise. If you think it is not a matter of honour, if you think that the independence of the country will be lost if you accept my result, I invite you to throw out my resolution by an overwhelming majority. But if you accept my resolution by overwhelming majority or even by any majority, whatsoever, then those who vote for this resolution should understand that it would be a matter of honour for them to work for it because they pledge themselves for it.

But why are you so oppressed? Why are you labouring under that inferiority complex that within a year we shall not be able to convince the British Parliament, that we shall not be able to marshal our forces and summon to ourselves the strength that we need. Swaraj is my birthright just as breathing through the lungs is my birthright. It must be as natural to you as your breath. Why are you so afraid?

I have got full faith. If you will help me and follow the programme honestly and intelligently, I promise that Swaraj will come within one year. I want you to die a proper death. I want you to develop full courage and die with calculated courage. If you have got that courage, if you can stand with your breast bare before the bullet, then I promise, you will get all that you possibly desire. Do not be frightened by the shadow. Do not be afraid of the long drawn out agony. I admit that it is a long drawn out process, but under the present state of the country when we cannot trust our brothers and sisters, our parents, and party leaders, when we cannot trust any body, when we have no sense of honour, when we cannot allow our words to remain unaltered for 24 hours, do not talk of independence. But if you will develop that calm courage and honesty of purpose and that determination which will refuse to accept 'No, for an answer to your demand, then I promise what the tallest among us can possibly desire.

Throughout these days we have heard a great deal that we are not able to carry on the Congress election campaign in an honest manner. It cut me to the quick when I heard that delegates' tickets passed hands and were sold like bills of exchange and the rates increased as the days went on and a rupee ticket sold for Rs. 15. It is discreditable to the Congress and I tell you that you are not going to get independence by these methods. On the other hand you are forging your own shackles, from which there will be no escape because it is of your own will. May God direct you in coming to a decision.

I do not want you to decide the question, because I am the mover of the resolution or because Pandit Motilal is at the back of the resolution. It is you who must decide with your calm reasoning but showing honour with it. (Loud Applause).

After M. Gandhi's speech Syed Majid Bux withdrew his amendment while other amendments including the one moved by Mrs. Besant were declared lost.

The President then put the resolution of Mr. Subhas Bose to the vote amidst cheers and counter cheers and great sensation prevailed.

Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta, Dr. Ansari, Pandit Jawaharlal, Lala Gridhari Lal and Mr. Jamnadal Bajaj were appointed tellers.

Counting of votes commenced from 11-30 p. m. and was complete at 1 a. m. with the result that Sj. Subhas Chandra Bose's amendment was lost by 973 voting for, while 1350 voting against. The Mahatma's resolution was then separately put to vote and adopted amidst deafening shouts of "Bande-Mataram" and Mahatma Gandhi-ji-ki-jai.

#### The Division.

Division on Sj. Subhas Chandra Bose's amendment took fully one hour and a half. Starting soon after half past eleven the division was over shortly after 1 A. M. Delegates were asked to go to their respective provincial blocks and two tellers were appointed for each block. In addition 6 supervisors were appointed. Both sides were equally represented both in tellers and supervisors. To delegates who raised the question as to whether persons not wearing Khaddar would be allowed to vote, Pandit Motilal ruled that those not wearing Khaddar could not vote but that he would leave it to the honour of the delegates to refrain from voting in case they were not Khaddar-wearers. Pandit Motilal also ruled that Ajmere delegates were debarred from voting in view of the serious irregularities reported against them. In regard to Punjab Pandit Motilal said that Dr. Satyapal has been asked to scrutinise those present and divide those entitled to vote. The pandal was replete with uproarious scenes all the time when voting was being taken. Figures of voting for provinces were not announced but as far as can be gathered they were as follows :

"Andhra for amendment 50 against 100, Madras for 50 against 105, C. P. Marathi for 14 against 21, C. P. Hindi for 31 against 32, Karnatak for 39 against 47, Bombay for 9 against 4, United Provinces for 112 against 267, Sindh for 9 against 20, Burma for 14 against 28, Maharashtra for 11 against 28, Behar for 55 against 365, Punjab for 82 against 79. In Bengal two-third of the delegates voted for the amendment. Gujerat, Berar and Kerala are said to have voted against the amendment. The House then adjourned

#### FOURTH DAY—1st JANUARY 1920.

To facilitate the completion of business for the session, the Subjects Committee continued its deliberations till 4 p. m. and the Congress could not sit before 4-30 p. m. on this day. At 4-25, the President arrived heralded by trumpets and after the national song *Bande Mataram* was sung in chorus, M. Gandhi entered the rostrum amidst thundering cheers and moved the second part of the resolution regarding constructive work which runs :

#### 14. Future Programme.

"Meanwhile the Congress shall engage in the following activities :

"(1) In the legislatures and outside every attempt will be made to bring about total prohibition of intoxicating drugs and drinks ; picketting of liquor and drug shops shall be organised wherever desirable and possible,

"(2) Inside and outside the legislatures methods suited to respective environments shall be immediately adopted to bring about boycott of foreign cloth by advocating and stimulating production and adoption of hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar.

"(3) Specific grievances wherever discovered and where people are ready shall be sought to be redressed by non-violent action as was done recently at Bardoli.

"(4) Members of legislatures returned on the Congress ticket shall devote the bulk of their time to the constructive work settled from time to time by the Congress Committee.

"(5) The Congress organisation shall be perfected by enlisting members and enforcing stricter discipline.

"(6) Measures shall be taken to remove the disabilities of women and they will be invited and encouraged to take their due share in national upbuilding.

"(7) Measures shall be taken to rid the country of social abuses.

"(8) It will be the duty of all Congressmen, being Hindus, to do all they can to remove untouchability and help the so-called untouchables in every possible way in their attempt to remove their disabilities and better their condition.

"(9) Volunteers shall be enlisted to take up work amongst the city labourers and village reconstruction in addition to what is being done through the spinning wheel and khaddar.

"(10) Such other work as may be deemed advisable in order to advance nation-building in all its departments and in order to enable the Congress to secure the co-operation in the national effort of the people engaged in different pursuits.

"In order to finance the activities mentioned in the foregoing programme, the Congress expects every Congressman to contribute to the Congress coffer certain percentage of his or her income according to his or her ability".

Explaining first the resolution in Hindi, the Mahatma proceeded to state it in English. He remarked that this resolution was an integral part of the resolution they had adopted yesterday and it was only for the same convenience that the Subjects Committee decided to take up the resolution in two parts. "I have agreed to accept Mr. Satyamurthi's two suggestions and he has withdrawn the other alternative amendment."

Mr. Satyamurthi's first suggestion to which he had agreed, continued M. Gandhi related to the organisation of the peasantry. He thought that his resolution also included that. Village reconstruction work in his resolution meant nothing but organising the peasantry. He wanted them to identify their lot with that of those upon whose life blood the city people were living. Let them therefore make a common cause.

So far as the work among the city labour was concerned, M. Gandhi had no objection to accept that suggestion, for he himself had identified with their cause for the last thirty or thirty-five years of his life. He had therefore a great pleasure in accepting that suggestion.

The second suggestion of Mr. Satyamurthi to which the Mahatma had agreed was with reference to the question of the levy of contribution.

He recognised the force of the argument of those who said that the time had not come and there was no discipline amongst them when every Congressman would feel an obligation to pay to the Congress coffer. That was why he had remodelled his resolution and accepted the formula suggested by Deshbandhu Das. That was that every congressman should contribute to the Congress coffer month by month in accordance with his ability to advance the cause of the Congress, more specially to operate the programme that was set before them.

"But I cannot help giving you a fair warning. I want you to take this resolution seriously. I do not want you to raise your hands and say that we accept the resolution and then sleep over it for twelve solid months. Neither should they expect the president of the Working Committee or the A. I. C. C. to work miracle. The only magic wand that can bring Swaraj within your group is an iron determined will. I shall therefore beseech you not to accept the resolution unless everyone of you is prepared to carry out all the items enacted in the programme with the

determination from village to village during the next twelve months. If you do that I promise that you will see before you a national atmosphere totally different from the atmosphere of distrust and despondency that I read in the face of everyone of you. With these words I commend the resolution to your acceptance."

Supporting the Mahatma, Mr. Srinivasa IYENGAR of Madras made a personal statement. He said that though he agreed with the compromise and was still bound by it, yet as his party had decided to take up a different position, he could not support it except by a silent vote. This gave him an opportunity to say that their programme in substance had been accepted by the Mahatma in the programme he had set forth. He had no doubt that this programme was the inevitable sequel of the resolution adopted yesterday. He thought that as the resolution was passed, all sections of the Congressmen would feel loyally bound to carry that out along with this programme. Whatever their differences might be, and differences must exist for the healthy growth of their national life, there could be no doubt that ample co-operation would be always available to carry out the programme faithfully with a view to securing complete independence. He did not believe that this programme was in the least calculated to achieve independence and that it was only calculated to attain Dominion Status. (Applause). Nor did he think that the compromise resolution was in any way a surrender to the great principle with which he must continue to identify himself till the end of his life. They must accept the resolution if they mean business. They must carry it out so that at the next December they might take up a bold and forward stand. He did not believe that the British Government was going to accept the Nehru Report in its entirety or in substantial measure, nor did he believe for a moment that the difference between the two wings of the Congress was going to be a permanent difference. He hopes that unity in action and in method would supersede when they meant practical work.

So far as the organisation of the peasantry was concerned, he had no doubt that Mahatmaji was in favour of it and Mr. Iyengar whole-heartedly supported him. As far as the levy of the contribution was concerned, it had been altered to make it feasible. He did not know whether they would be able to carry out the programme in full but he hoped that they would make an honest attempt to do that and if they really did that, then that itself would be a great forward step. Perfect programme unaccompanied by any work as had been their custom in the past would certainly lead nowhere. What was required was that the items of the resolution should be carried out in full in every village and in every province without any kind of hesitation.

With two dissentients only the Mahatma's resolution was carried.

### 15. Trades Disputes & Public Safety Bills.

Mr. Aftab Ali (Bengal) moved :

"That this Congress expresses its emphatic protest at the Trade Disputes Bill and the Public Safety Bill which it regards as a wholly reactionary attempt to restrict the growth of organised labour movement and as an absolutely unjustifiable infringement upon the rights of the people".

Mr. Aftab Ali dwelt on the dangers of both these bills to the growth of labour movement. The resolution was seconded by Mr. Thengade and was passed.

### 16. Boycott of the Simon Commission.

Mr. Jamnadas Mehta moved :

"This Congress congratulates the people of the country on the success of the boycott of the Statutory Commission, and in particular the people of Lahore and Lucknow, who despite the savage and brutal attacks of the police maintained discipline and peacefully continued their boycott demonstrations and thus triumphed over the official lawlessness and brutality.

"The Congress has noted however that some people have deliberately violated the nation's resolve to boycott the Commission and have in defiance of the nation's will co-operated with the Simon Commission and taken a leading part in welcoming it. In view of this unnational conduct of some people and in view of the part taken by some officials, British and Indian, in the brutal assault by the police on national workers, this Congress advises the people to refrain from



having any social dealings with any such persons who assault national workers or who take a leading part in co-operating with the Commission. In particular, the Congress advises that such persons should not be invited to social functions and no social functions given by them or in their honour should be attended.

"This Congress appeals to the people to make the boycott complete and effective in the provinces in which the Commission may visit hereafter by organising amongst other things, hartals and other mass demonstrations and advises the people to disobey all orders of the Government prohibiting such activities".

In commending the resolution to the Congress Mr. Jamnadas Mehta said that the Indian boycott of the Simon Commission was as complete and effective as was the Egyptian boycott of the Milner Commission. In Egypt as in India there were certain persons who went against the nation's mandate and co-operated with the Commissions that were sent out. That should not however lead to minimising the extent, efficiency and universal nature of boycott in India. He appealed to Calcutta to boycott the Simon Commission on its return from Shillong as effectively as the visit of the Prince of Wales was boycotted. Calcutta saw the beginning of the British rule and he hoped it would prove the grave of the British rule. He also appealed to the national workers to disobey all arbitrary orders which magistracy might issue in connection with the boycott demonstrations.

Dr. Satyapal seconded the resolution. He dwelt on the Lahore occurrences and said that the resolution before the House was only a fitting answer.

Pandit Nekiram Sharma moved an amendment for the substitution of the words "political boycott" instead of the word "boycott." The amendment was rejected and the resolution was carried unanimously.

### 17. Indian States.

Mr. Manilal Kothari then moved :—

"This Congress urges on the Ruling princes of the Indian States to introduce responsible Government based on representative institutions in the States, and to issue immediately proclamations or enact laws guaranteeing elementary and fundamental rights of citizenship, such as rights of association, free speech, free press and security of person and property.

"This Congress further assures the people of the Indian States of its sympathy with and support in their legitimate and peaceful struggle for the attainment of full responsible Government in the States".

Mr. Kothari said that the Princes were ill-advised in relying on British arms to protect them. Instead they should rely on the loyalty and affection of their subjects. The subjects were all animated by the good-will and if only the Princes would reciprocate that spirit, they would find that the people were ready to shed their last drop of blood for their rulers.

The Maharaja of Bikaner had said that the Princes were proud of their ancestry and their blood. The subjects were more proud of the ancestry and the noble blood of their Princes. Only they wanted the Princes to show by their action that they were capable of living up to liberal traditions of their ancestry and noble blood. Barring honorable exceptions there was a complete absence of any rule of law in Native states. Personal liberty was ever in danger.

In conclusion, Mr. Manilal Kothari welcomed the decision of the Congress Subjects Committee to recommend to the Congress to delete the clause which stood against Congress intervention in Indian States and regarded it as marking a new era when the Congress assured the people of Indian States that their entire moral and material resources were at the back of the subjects of the Indian States.

Mr. Satyamurti seconded the resolution. Mr. Jamnalal Bajaj also supported and the resolution was passed unanimously.

### 18. Changes in the Constitution.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru next moved from the Chair resolutions adopted by the Subjects Committee relating to the changes in the constitution etc. (For text See

p. 375). The Congress agreed without discussion to the following changes namely (1) that from the next year 50 percent of the surplus of the funds after the holding of the Congress should be paid to the All India Congress Committee. (2) That in future it should be within the competence of the All India Congress Committee to affiliate foreign organisations to the Congress. (3) That hereafter the North Western Frontier shall be constituted as a separate Congress province. (4) That the clause in the present constitution which prevents the Congress from intervening in the Native State affairs be deleted. (5) That the number of secretaries of the Congress shall be reduced from three to two and that the elected seats on the Working Committee be increased by one and that the delegates' fees be raised from rupees five and subscriptions of the All India Congress Committee members from provinces be used to adjustment of payments by the All India Congress Committee to the province.

#### INDO-CHINESE DELEGATES.

Pandit Motilal was absent from the chair for a brief while when Dr. Ansari officiated for him. Dr. Ansari introduced to the Congress amidst considerable enthusiasm two delegates from Indo-China who had just then arrived in Calcutta.

Introducing the Indo-Chinese delegates Dr. Ansari said that they had to undergo considerable hardships in order to attend the Congress. At Singapore they were made to dis-embark from their steamer and to transfer themselves to a cargo steamer. That explained their delayed arrival at the Congress. They could reach Calcutta only on that day. Even after their arrival at Calcutta persecution of the police did not cease. Their belongings were searched, letters to the Congress were read and copied. These statements were greeted with loud cries of "shame shame" from all quarters of the Pandal. Dr. Ansari welcomed the delegates on behalf of and in the name of the Congress.

The senior delegate spoke in French which was later interpreted by Pandit Jawaharlal. He said in effect : "I am sorry for late arrival. I extend to you on behalf of the Constitutional Party of Indo-China fraternal greetings. (cheers) I wish you on their behalf success in your struggle for freedom and pray that your movement might succeed. I speak for the people of Indo-China numbering 23 millions while yours is a country of 33 millions. But in this as in other matters what counts is quality and not quantity. We have extreme sympathy for your movement. The emancipation of the oppressed peoples is not the work of one single country or people. It is the work of the people of all oppressed countries. In conclusion let me say, "long live Freedom of India" (prolonged cheers).

#### Other Resolutions.

Mr. Bijoy Krishna Bose moved that this Congress conveys its sympathies to the families of the brave sons of Bengal who underwent suffering and imprisonment without trial for the cause of the country and died during their incarceration.

Mr. Bardoloi seconded the resolution which was carried unanimously.

Pt Shyamsundar Chakravarti next moved that in the opinion of the Congress the internment of the Maharaja of Nabha is unjust, unconstitutional and vindictive and the Congress sympathises with the Maharaja and his family.

Baba Gurdit Singh seconded the resolution and the resolution was carried.

A resolution was next put from the Chair that this Congress strongly condemns the unwarranted arrests of Kedar Nath Saigal and others of the Congress and Youth organisations and expresses indignation at the torture of the prisoners arrested. The resolution was carried.

There was a discussion in regard to the increase of delegates' fees from rupee one to rupees five.

Mr. Sriprakash moved that the delegates' fee be increased from rupee one to rupees five. The proposal was opposed by Mr. B. S. Sastri from Madras and Mr. Nimbakar from Bombay. Babu Rajendra Prosad supported an increase in the delegation fees as it was essential to enable the Congress work to be

carried on. Pandit Jawaharlal also supported the proposed increase. On votes being taken the proposal for an increase was declared carried by a large majority. Dissentients were very few. The result was acclaimed as very satisfactory and significant as the proposals for an increase had been successfully resisted whenever raised.

The Congress also agreed to the proposal that there should be a permanent fund from the interest of which normal Congress work should be carried.

The Congress next accepted the invitation of Lala Girdharilal to hold the next session at Lahore. Sardar Sardul Singh who seconded the resolution assured the delegates that it was most fitting that the next session should meet in Lahore especially as the Congress had resolved to declare for complete independence.

The Congress also carried from the chair a resolution condemning detention without trial of Santa Singh, Gajjan Singh and Daswanadha Singh and also the continued incarceration of martial law prisoners and congratulating Mr. Narayana menon on his refusal of offers of conditional release.

#### Vote of Thanks to the Chair.

Mr. Sen Gupta next advanced to the rostrum amidst cheers to propose the vote of thanks to the President. Said he: "I breathe a sigh of relief that this Congress is about to an end. The Congress week has in our case become a Congress fortnight. We do not regret the prolongation of the national week. On the contrary we consider it as a high honour. We had to meet from day to day anxious situations which threatened on many occasions to become serious and unmanageable. You are all aware of anxious times which we had to pass through in the last few days. I am glad to be able to say that we have triumphed over all our difficulties under the presidency of Pandit Motilal Nehru (cheers). Under his sole, energetic and courageous leadership we have taken the final step towards independence (cheers). I am sure, that all of us who took part in the controversies of the last few days will forget that we fought at all or that we engaged in any controversy. We must leave aside our differences in the Congress pandal and work in harmony and unison because we must give a good fight to a common enemy who is waiting outside the Pandal to give us battle. (cheers). As the President, Pandit Motilal has conducted the business of the Congress not only efficiently, but with courage. (cheers). We were confronted with a critical political situation. We had the All-Party Convention. We had the Commission issue and the challenge of the British Government. To one and all of these issues that confronted us, we have been able to find a satisfactory solution under Panditji's guidance. I venture to assert that we could have had no leader more worthy to fill the chair of the Indian National Congress and to lead us in our fight than Pandit Motilal (cheers). Permit me also to offer him on behalf of the Reception Committee and on behalf of the delegates and the whole Indian nation our warmest thanks for his valued guidance. We look forward with confidence to the year that lies before us, because we are under his leadership and it cannot be in better hands. (cheers). I also crave your permission to convey thanks to you, and to all my colleagues in the Reception Committee. As I have told you, we had to contend with many difficulties and we have been able to overcome them only through their untiring energy and devotion to their tasks. It will be invidious to mention names, but I must mention Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, General Secretary, S. J. Subhas Chandra Bose, General Officer Commanding, Mrs. Latika Basu, Officer-in-charge of Lady Volunteers, Mr. Nalini Ranjan Sarkar and many others who have contributed to the success of the Congress. I am sure, I speak for you all when I take this opportunity to convey to all volunteers our grateful appreciation of their labours. There have been few complaints, but they have served on the whole splendidly animated by no spirit but that of service of their country and the leaders of the nation. I also beg of you to forgive the Reception Committee for all their failings and to remember only that they tried to do their best. (cheers).

Mr. Sen Gupta paid a warm tribute to the Exhibition and its Secretary Mr. N. R. Sarkar and said that it was the most unrivalled exhibition and unique in the annals of Exhibitions.

Mr. Srinivasa IYENGAR seconded the vote of thanks. "On behalf of the delegates and all others I thank the Reception Committee and the various other auxiliary organisations attached to it for all that they have done for us. This is the first Congress to be held in Calcutta after Deshbandhu's death and it will go down in history as the most memorable session of the Congress. This year there has been an exceptional assemblage of Conferences and Committees and Bengal, beloved Bengal, Bengal of Deshbandhu has risen to the occasion most splendidly and treated us all magnificently.

After enumerating various office-bearers of the Reception Committee amongst whom he made special mention of S. J. Subhas Ch Bose, Dr Bidhan Ch Roy, S. J. Nalini Ranjan Sarkar and others associated with them Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar declared: "In this Congress we have taken a big forward step towards freedom. I am confident that in martial Punjab we shall raise finally fully the flag of complete independence. Bengal has given us sufficient indications that it proposes to be in the vanguard of our struggle for freedom and proposes to take second place to none. (cheers). Emotional and warmhearted Bengal has justified itself in every respect and we are deeply grateful to it for all that it has done for us.

Referring to the volunteers Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar said that they had shown how the Indian youth could be trained under Indian leadership to be as efficient and disciplined as anybody of European youth.

The vote of thanks was carried amidst scenes of considerable enthusiasm. Amidst shouts of "Bande Mataram" and "Motilalji Ki Jai" Pandit Motilal advanced to the rostrum and addressed the audience in Urdu in spite of the failing of voice due to sore throat. Owing to silence in which the vast audience listened to the Pandit he was heard all over the Pandal and the whole course of the speech was received with cheers at every stage.

#### President's Concluding Speech.

The President said:—"I am sorry that owing to the failure of my voice. I have not been able to serve you as a President personally, as I should have wished. The Reception Committee had to contend with many odds and it is due entirely to their zeal, devotion and enthusiasm that they have been overcome. Our thanks are due to them all. In my opinion not only has the arrangements made by the Reception Committee proved satisfactory, but so also the work of the Congress. There are amongst you those who think that the resolution of Mahatmaji which was placed before you was not as strong as it should have been. Let me tell you that it is as strong as it could be desired to be. Subash, I shall call him not brother but my son (cheers). He has always regarded me as father. To me Subash and Jawahar are alike. (cheers) I make no difference between them. I see no difference between them. (cheers) Both Subhas and Jawahar have told you in their speeches on the amendment to Mahatmaji's resolution that in their opinion we old-age men are no good, are not strong enough and are hopelessly behind the times. There is nothing new in this. (laughter). It is common in this world that young always regard aged men as behind times. I would only give you one word of advice. Erase from your mind from to-day those two terms borrowed from foreign language namely, Independence and Dominion Status and take to the words Swaraj and Azadi (freedom). Let us work for Swaraj by whatever name we might call it. Let us work for our country's freedom by whatever phraseology we might denote it. Let your ideal be independence or Dominion Status, the methods of attaining one or the other are the same. Carry out the programme which Mahatmaji placed before you and which you have accepted. One year is nothing in the history of a nation. Concentrate throughout the year to make the programme a success. I have not the least doubt that the next Congress will see us united and taking another forward step.

"I must not omit to make mention of Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar. He is no small personality. He has the spirit of a young, but he is 54 years old. He is like a bull without its horns amongst the cows. To him I look to serve as a ladder between the young and the old. He has rendered invaluable service with his youthful spirit and ripe experience.

"In conclusion, I ask forgiveness of the delegates whom some stray act or remark of mine might have given offence. I also ask for forgiveness of those who feel aggrieved at some of my rulings. I only want to assure you all that whatever I did in the course of my presidential duties I did in the sincere belief that I was performing my duty. I am here ready in your service. It is for you to make such use of me as you think fit. Whether you use me in your service most or least depends on you. I thank you once again for all kindness you have shown me. (Cheers and cries of "Bande Mataram" and "Motilaji Ki Jai.")

After the singing of the National Anthem the Congress concluded amidst scenes of enthusiasm and rejoicings that notwithstanding the seemingly insurmountable difficulties a successful conclusion had been reached.

## CONSTITUTION OF THE Indian National Congress.

*AS AMENDED AT THE CALCUTTA SESSION, 1928.*

### *Article I.*

The object of the Indian National Congress is the attainment of Sawarajya by the people of India by all legitimate and peaceful means.

OBJECT

### *Article II.*

(a) The Indian National Congress shall ordinarily meet once every year during the last week of December at such place as may have been decided upon at its previous session or such other place as may have been determined by the All India Congress Committee hereinafter referred to.

SESSIONS OF  
THE  
CONGRESS

(b) An extraordinary session of the Congress shall be summoned by the All India Congress Committee on the requisition of a majority of the Provincial Congress Committees or of its own motion, provided, in the latter case, due notice has been given and the proposal is supported by two thirds of the members present. The All India Congress Committee shall determine the place where such session is to be held, and the articles of the constitution shall apply with such modifications as the All India Congress Committee may consider necessary in respect of each such session.

### *Article III.*

The Indian National Congress organisation shall consist of the following :—

COMPONENT (a) The Indian National Congress.  
PARTS OF THE (b) The All India Congress Committee.  
CONGRESS (c) Provincial Congress Committees.  
(d) District Congress Committees.

(e) Sub-Divisional, Taluq or Tahsil, Firka and other local Congress Committees.

(f) Such other committees outside India as may from time to time be recognised by the Congress or the All India Congress Committee in this behalf.

(g) The Reception Committee of the Congress.

Note : Provincial, District, Taluq or Tahsil and other conferences may be organised by the above-named committees for educative and propaganda purposes.

### *Article IV*

No person shall be eligible to be a member of any of the organisations referred to in the foregoing Article, unless he or she attained the

CONGRESS age of 18 and expresses in writing his or her acceptance of the  
MEMBERSHIP object and the methods as laid down in Article I of this constitution and of the rules of the Congress,

*Article V.*

The following shall be the provinces with headquarters mentioned against them, but in every case the respective Provincial Congress Committees shall have the power to alter the headquarters from time to time.

<i>Province</i>	<i>Language</i>	<i>Headquarters</i>
1 Ajmer-Merwara and Rajputana	Hindustani	Ajmer
2 Andhra	Telugu	Madras
3 Assam	Assamese	Gauhati
4 Behar	Hindustani	Patna
5 Bengal and Surma Valley	Bengali	Calcutta
6 Berar	Marathi	Amraoti
7 Burma	Burmese	Rangoon
8 Cental Provinces (Hindustani)	Hindustani	Jubbulpore
9 Central Provinces (Marathi)	Marathi	Nagpur
10 City of Bombay	Marathi and Gujrati	Bombay
11 Delhi	Hindustani	Delhi
12 Gujrat	Gujrati	Ahmedabad
13 Karnatak	Kannada	Gadag
14 Kerala	Malayalam	Calicut
15 Maharashtra	Marathi	Poona
16 N. W. F. Province	Hindustani	Peshawar
17 Punjab	Punjabi	Lahore
18 Sind	Sindhi	Karachi
19 Tamil Nadu	Tamil	Madras
20 United Provinces	Hindustani	Benares
21 Utkal	Oriya	Cuttack

Provided that the All India Congress Committee may from time to time assign particular Indian States to particular provinces, and a Provincial Congress Committee may in its turn allot particular Indian States assigned to it by the All India Congress Committee to particular districts within its jurisdiction.

*Article VI.*

(a) There shall be a Provincial Congress Committee in and for each of the provinces named in the foregoing Article.

(b) Each Provincial Congress Committee shall organise District and other committees referred to in Article III and shall have the power to frame rules laying down conditions of membership and for the conduct of business not inconsistent with this constitution or any rules made by the All India Congress Committee.

(c) Each Provincial Congress Committee shall consist of representatives elected annually by the members of the Congress organisations in the province in accordance with the rules made by the Provincial Congress Committee.

(d) Each Provincial Congress Committee shall submit an annual report of the Congress work in the province to the All India Congress Committee before the 30th November.

*Article VII.*

(f) Every person not disqualified under Article IV and paying a subscription of annas 4 per year in advance, or 2,000 yards of evenly spun yarn of his or her own spinning shall be entitled to become a member of any primary organisation controlled by a Provincial Congress Committee provided that no person shall be a member of two parallel Congress organisations at one and the same time.

(ii) The yarn subscription mentioned in section (i) shall be sent direct by the spinner to the Secretary, All India Spinners' Association or to any person nominated by the Secretary in this behalf, and a certificate from the Secretary, All India Spinners' Association to the effect that he has received 2000 yards of evenly spun yarn of the holder's own spinning as his or her yearly subscription shall entitle the holder to the membership mentioned in section (i) hereof provided that for the purpose of checking the accuracy of the returns made by the All India Spinners' Association, the All India Congress Committee or any Provincial Congress Committee or any sub-committee thereunder shall have the right to inspect the accounts, the stock and the vouchers of the All India Spinners' Association or any subordinate organisation thereunder and provided further that in the event of any inaccuracy or error discovered by the inspecting body in the accounts, stock or vouchers examined, the certificates issued by the All India Spinners' Association in respect of persons with reference to whose membership the accounts have been examined, shall be declared cancelled; provided that the All India Spinners' Association or the person disqualified shall have the right of appeal to the Working Committee. Any person wishing to spin for the membership of the Congress may, if he or she desires, be supplied upon due security with cotton for spinning.

(iii) The year of the membership shall be reckoned from the 1st January to the 31st December and there shall be no reduction in the subscription to be paid by members joining in the year.

(iv) a. No person shall be entitled to vote at the election of representatives or delegates or any committee or sub-committee of any Congress organisation whatsoever or to be elected as such or to take part in any meeting of the Congress or Congress organisation or any committee or sub-committee thereof, if he has not complied with section (i) hereof and does not habitually wear hand-woven khaddar.

b. The Working Committee shall frame rules for the proper carrying out of the provisions of this section.

### Article VIII.

Each Provincial Congress Committee shall be responsible for the election of delegates to the Congress.

#### ELECTORATES

#### AND

#### DELEGATES

No one who had not enlisted himself as a Congress member on or before the 1st October immediately preceding a particular session of the Congress shall be qualified for election as a delegate to that session.

The members of the All India Congress Committee shall be ex-officio delegates to the Congress. Besides these ex-officio delegates the number of delegates returnable by Provincial Congress Committees shall be not more than one for every fifty thousand, or its fraction, of the inhabitants of each province, including the Indian States therein, in accordance with the census of 1921.

Each Provincial Congress Committee shall frame rules for the election of delegates, due regard being had to the return of women delegates and the representation of minorities, special interests or classes needing special protection.

The rules shall provide for the organisation of electorates and shall prescribe the procedure to be adopted for securing the proportional representation, by a single transferable vote or by any other method, every variety of political opinion. Notice of all changes in the rules framed by the Provincial Congress Committee shall forthwith be sent to the general secretaries of the Congress.

Each Provincial Congress Committee shall send to the office of the All India Congress Committee, an alphabetical list of the delegates so elected, containing the full name, occupation, age, sex, religion and address of each of them to reach the office not later than seven days before the date fixed for the holding of the session. In case, however, of interim vacancies, the Provincial Congress Committee shall fill them in accordance with the rules made in that behalf. Such rules shall not be valid unless they have been previously confirmed by the Working

Committee. No changes however shall be made in the delegates list within seven days of the Congress.

#### Article IX.

Each Provincial Congress Committee shall pay annually such subscription to the All India Congress Committee as may be fixed by the latter at its first meeting after the Congress. In fixing the subscription the All India Congress Committee shall pay regard not merely to the population of the province but to its financial capacity.

#### Article X.

Each committee referred to in Article VIII shall issue certificates to the delegates duly elected in accordance with the form hereto attached, marked Appendix B, and signed by a secretary of the committee.

#### Article XI.

Every delegate on presenting such a certificate and paying a fee of five rupees at the office of the All India Congress Committee in the Congress camp at the place where the Congress is held shall receive a ticket entitling him to admission to the Congress.

#### Article XII.

Delegates shall alone have the power of voting at the Congress sittings or otherwise taking part in its deliberations.

VOTING AT  
CONGRESS

#### Article XIII.

The Reception Committee shall be formed by the Provincial Congress Committee at least six months before the meeting of the annual session and may include persons who are not members of the Provincial Congress Committee. The members of the Reception Committee shall pay not less than Rs. 25 each.

RECEPTION  
COMMITTEE

#### Article XIV.

The Reception Committee shall elect its chairman and other office-bearers from amongst its own members.

#### Article XV.

It shall be the duty of the Reception Committee to collect funds for the expenses of the Congress session, to elect the president of the Congress in the manner set forth in the following Article, to make all necessary arrangements for the reception and accommodation of delegates and guests and, as far as practicable, of visitors, and for the printing and publication of the report of the proceedings, and to submit statements of receipts and expenditure to the Provincial Congress Committee within four months of the session of the Congress.

#### Article XVI.

The several Provincial Congress Committees shall, as far as possible, by the end of June, suggest to the Reception Committee the names of persons who are in their opinion eligible for the presidency of the Congress, and the Reception Committee shall, as far as possible, in the first week of July, submit to all the Provincial Committees the names so suggested, for their final recommendations; provided that such final recommendation will be of any one but not more of such names, and the Reception Committee shall, as far as possible, meet in the month of August to consider such recommendations. If the person recommended by a majority of the Provincial Congress Committees is adopted by a majority of the members of the Reception Committee present at a special meeting called for the purpose, that person shall be the president of the next Congress. If, however, the Reception Committee is unable to accept the president recommended by the Provincial Con-

ELECTION OF  
THE  
PRESIDENT



gress Committees, or an emergency arises by resignation, death or otherwise, of the president elected in this manner, the matter shall forthwith be referred by it to the All India Congress Committee whose decision shall be arrived at, as far as possible, before the end of September. In either case, the election shall be final provided that in no case shall the person so elected as president belong to the province in which the Congress is to be held.

The president of a special or extraordinary session shall be elected by the All India Congress Committee subject to the same proviso.

#### *Article XVII.*

(a) The All India Congress Committee shall pay to the Reception Committee within a fortnight after the termination of the Congress session one-fifth of the delegation fees.

(b) If the Reception Committee has a balance after defraying all the expenses of the session, it shall hand over 50% thereof to the Provincial Congress Committee in the province in which the session was held, towards the Provincial Congress fund of that province, and the remaining 50% to the All India Congress Committee.

#### *Article XVIII.*

(a) The receipts and expenditure of the Reception Committee shall be audited by an auditor or auditors appointed by the Provincial Congress Committee concerned, and the statement of accounts together with the auditor's report shall be sent by the Provincial Committee not later than six months from the termination of the Congress, to the All India Congress Committee.

(b) The accounts of the All India Congress Committee shall be audited every year by an auditor appointed at the annual session. It shall be competent to this auditor to call for and inspect the accounts of the Provincial Congress Committees.

(c) The All India Congress Committee shall take steps to ensure that the accounts of the Provincial Congress Committees are properly audited.

#### *Article XIX.*

The All India Congress Committee shall consist of 350 members, exclusive of ex-officio members. Every member of the All India Congress Committee, ex-officio or elected, shall pay an annual subscription of Rs. 10, payable at or before the first meeting of the All India Congress Committee. Members in default will not be permitted to take part in any meeting of the All India Congress Committee or the Subjects Committee.

The ex-officio members shall be the elected president, past presidents of the Congress if they sign Article I of this constitution and are members of any Congress organisation, the general secretaries and the treasures of the Congress.

Each Provincial Congress Committee shall elect the allotted number of members of the All India Congress Committee from among the members of the Congress Committees within its jurisdiction.

The allotment shall be, as far as possible, on the basis of population according to the linguistic distribution of provinces, as given in Appendix C.

The method of election shall be the same as already prescribed for the election of delegates.

Elections to the All India Congress Committee shall ordinarily take place in the month of November.

Casual vacancies in the All India Congress Committee caused by resignation, death, absence from India, or otherwise, shall be filled by the Provincial Congress Committee.

The All India Congress Committee shall meet as often as may be necessary for the discharge of its obligations, and every time upon requisition by 30 members thereof, who shall state in their requisition the definite purpose for which they desire a meeting of the All India Congress Committee. When once such a meeting is

requisitioned and convened, additional subjects may be brought up for consideration provided due notice has been given to the members of the same.

The quorum for the All India Congress Committee shall be fifty.

The All India Congress Committee shall hold office till the election of the new All India Congress Committee.

#### *Article XX.*

The secretaries of the respective Provincial Congress Committees shall issue certificates of membership of the All India Congress Committee to the persons so elected.

#### *Article XXI.*

The All India Congress Committee shall be the committee of the Congress to carry out the programme of work laid down by the Congress from year to year and deal with all new matters that may arise during the year and may not be provided for by the Congress itself. For this purpose the All India Congress Committee shall have the power to frame its own rules not inconsistent with this constitution.

#### *Article XXII.*

The president of the Congress shall be the Congress Committee for the year following.

#### *Article XXIII.*

The Indian National Congress shall have two general secretaries and two treasurers, who shall be annually elected by the Congress.

There shall be a permanent fund of the Congress the interest on which shall be used for the ordinary work of the All India Congress Committee. The corpus of the fund shall not be spent.

The treasurers shall be in charge of the funds of the Congress and shall keep proper accounts of them. The general secretaries shall be in charge of the office of the All India Congress Committee and shall be responsible for the publication of the report of the proceedings of the preceding session of the Congress and of any special session held in the course of the year, in co-operation with the Reception Committee. Such report shall be published as soon as possible and not later than four months after the session, and shall be offered for sale.

The general secretaries shall prepare the report of the work of the All India Congress Committee during the year and submit it, with a full account of the funds which may come into their hands, to the All India Congress Committee at a meeting to be held at the place and about the time of the session of the Congress for the year; and copies of such account and report shall then be presented to the Congress Committees and published along with the next Congress report.

There shall be one permanent paid secretary who shall be in charge of the office of the All India Congress Committee.

#### *Article XXIV.*

The All India Congress Committee shall, at its first meeting after the annual session of the Congress, elect ten members who shall, with the president, general secretaries and treasurers, be the Working Committee of the Congress and the executive authority responsible to the All India Congress Committee in all matters.

All proceedings of the Working Committee shall be placed before the next meeting of the All India Congress Committee.

#### *Article XXV.*

The members of the All India Congress Committee shall constitute the Subjects Committee for the ordinary or extraordinary session following.

#### *Article XXVI.*

The Subjects Committee shall meet at least two days before the meeting of the Congress in open session. At this meeting, the president-elect shall preside, and

the outgoing secretaries shall submit the draft programme of the work for the ensuing session of the Congress, including resolutions recommended by the different Provincial Congress Committees for adoption.

#### *Article XXVII.*

The Subjects Committee shall proceed to discuss the said programme and shall frame resolutions to be submitted to the open session.

#### *Article XXVIII.*

The Subjects Committee shall also meet from time to time, as the occasion may require, during the pendency of the Congress session.

#### *Article XXIX.*

No subject shall be passed for discussion by the Subjects Committee or allowed to be discussed at any Congress by the president thereof, to the introduction of which the Hindu or Mohammedan delegates, as a body, object by a majority of three-fourths of their number, and if, after the discussion of any subject which has been admitted for discussion, it shall appear that the Hindu or Mohammedan delegates, as a body, are, by a majority of three-fourths of their number, opposed to the resolution which it is proposed to pass thereon, such resolution shall be dropped.

#### *Article XXX.*

At each sitting of the Congress, the order in which business shall be transacted shall be as follows :—

ORDER OF BUSINESS (a) The resolutions recommended for adoption by the Subjects Committee.

(b) Any substantive motion not included in (a) but which does not fall under Article XXIX of the constitution and which 25 delegates request the president in writing, before the commencement of the day's sitting, to be allowed to place before the Congress ; provided, however, that no such motion shall be allowed unless it has been previously discussed at a meeting of the Subjects Committee and has received the support of at least a third of the members then present.

#### *Article XXXI.*

The All India Congress Committee shall have the power to frame rules in respect of all matters not covered by the constitution and not inconsistent with its Articles.

#### *Article XXXII.*

The All India Congress Committee shall, at its first meeting every year, nominate a panel of twelve members to enquire into and finally decide all election disputes coming before it. The parties to the dispute shall nominate one each out of this panel to represent the respective disputants, and the president shall choose the third.

#### *Article XXXIII.*

The proceedings of the Congress, the All India Congress Committee and the Working Committee shall ordinarily be conducted in Hindustani ; the English language or any provincial language may be used if the speaker is unable to speak in Hindustani or whenever necessary.

The proceedings of the Provincial Congress Committees shall ordinarily be conducted in the language of the province concerned. Hindustani may also be used.

# The National Liberal Federation.

ALLAHABAD—30 & 31 DECEMBER 1928.

The Mayo Hall, Allahabad, was filled to overflowing to welcome Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, President of the eleventh session of the National Liberal Federation, on the 30th DECEMBER 1928.

Among the distinguished Liberals present at the opening session were Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar (Madras), Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikari (Bengal), Sir Sanker Rao Chitnavis (Nagpur) and a large number of delegates from different parts of the country, including several ladies. Great enthusiasm was exhibited throughout the proceedings.

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru in proposing the election of Sir Chimanlal Setalvad said that Sir Chimanlal's long and varied experience in different spheres fitted him eminently for the position. He pressed the attention of the Liberals to the claim for Dominion Status, which he said was the least they should demand.

The motion was seconded by Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar and supported by Sir D. P. Sarvadhikari and Sir Sankar Rao Chitnavis.

Sir Chimanlal Setalvad then took the chair and delivered his presidential address. The following is the text :—

## THE PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

Mr. Chairman, Fellow-Liberals, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I very much appreciate the honour you have done me in asking me to preside over the 11th Session of the National Liberal Federation of India. This session is of special importance by reason of the momentous questions that are exercising the minds of the people and the Government of this country and which require the highest statesmanship and balanced judgment for their proper solution. The responsibilities therefore of the person invited to guide the deliberations of this session, are indeed heavy, but I am sure you will extend to me your reasoned advice, support and co-operation in discharging my duty as the President of this Session.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is very gratifying that we are getting every day better news about the progress that His Majesty the King-Emperor is making towards full recovery. At one time great anxiety was felt but by the grace of God His Majesty is now out of danger and is steadily gaining strength. The loyal devotion to His Majesty that was manifest in this country along with the rest of the Empire during those anxious days, testifies to the universal regard and esteem in which His Majesty is held.

Last year when the Federation was in session, we lost a great patriot by the death of Hakim Ajmal Khan. This year we have to mourn the loss of another great patriot who like Ajmal Khan was a tower of strength to Indian Nationalism and to the cause of Hindu-Moslem unity. The circumstances connected with his sudden and tragic death have left a very sad impression throughout the country. India can ill afford to lose at this juncture a leader of that eminence. We have also lost in Lord Sinha a great Liberal and a great and patriotic Indian who had shed lustre on his country.

The Liberal Party has a proud record extending over a long period, of valuable work for the political, social and material advancement of this country. Up to the time when the Liberals left the Congress, that body stood and worked for constitutional advance by constitutional methods. The Congress of those days valued and wanted to retain the British connection and claimed full responsible government within the Empire. The reforms of 1921 were the direct result of the work of the Congress of those days. When the Congress strayed away from those principles and methods the Liberals stood steadfastly by those constitutional principles and methods, and unswayed by fear of popular displeasure, had the courage to separate from the Congress.

The task of politicians who violently declaim against the existing order of things and promise to the people the attainment of Swaraj within three, six, or twelve months is easy. The task of those who face realities and want to make progress on solid foundations and have therefore sometimes to counsel patience, is necessarily not very popular. Those who want to keep their hold on the uninformed populace by making glib promises and by spectacular fire-works are compelled of necessity to go further and further. What pleases the populace to-day is not enough to please it to-morrow and they must therefore produce something still more spectacular at every stage. That is how some of the Congress politicians have got pushed further and further into non-co-operation, civil disobedience, direct action, non-payment of taxes, independence, socialism and communism.

### **The Liberal Party and the Reforms of 1921**

When the wave of non-co-operation swept the country, the Liberals kept their heads, put their shoulders to the wheel and worked the reforms inadequate though they considered them to be, and they worked them well under very difficult and adverse circumstances. Those who styled themselves Independents refrained from joining the party of civil disobedience and non-violent non-co-operation, but still abstained from coming into the legislatures and working the constitution. The Liberals and others who then went to the Councils worked under a double handicap. On the one hand they were bitterly attacked and abused by the non-co-operation party; and on the other hand, Government when it suited it to disregard their views and advice, made no scruples in saying that they did not represent the people because at the elections a large proportion of the electorates had abstained from voting.

The Congress politicians and the so-called Independents realised after some years what the Liberals had instinctively realised from the beginning that the wise and profitable course was to get into the legislatures and work the reforms for what they were worth. The Swarajists stood for the elections of 1923 and came into the legislatures in large numbers, pretending, however, that they were going to non-co-operate from within. After making heroic gestures of throwing out Budgets and the Finance Bills, they settled down to the normal work of the legislatures.

Paradoxical as it may seem, it is Government who have by their blundering and hesitating policy at every step, created extremism and helped it at every stage to gather greater strength just when it was about to lose ground. Their unwise action in putting the Rowlatt Acts on the Statute Book in defiance of united Indian opinion throughout the country, gave birth to civil disobedience. The Punjab Martial Law administration and the horrors for which it was responsible created the cult of non-violent non-co-operation and non-payment of taxes and the obstructive and hostile attitude of the Swarajists in the legislatures. The Simon Commission muddle of last year brought into existence the party advocating complete independence. Government have always failed to respond adequately and timely to legitimate Indian aspirations as voiced by sane and responsible political sections, and by their hesitation and delay have lost opportunity after opportunity of catching the imagination of the people and securing their contentment. They are so much lost in admiration of what they had done for India and of the efficiency of their administration that they wonder and resent that Indians should be dissatisfied with the present order of things and should demand full self-government.

### **The Simon Blunder.**

The action and attitude of Government in respect of the Simon Commission are typical of this mentality. Under the Government of India Act, they were not bound to set up the Statutory Commission till the end of 1929. They decided to accelerate the appointment of the Commission in order to meet united Indian public opinion, but then they proceeded to do so in a manner that has aroused hostility and opposition throughout the land. They forget that no constitution however well-designed can work with fruitful results and that no Government however powerful can rule a country like India with its vast area and population except with the general acquiescence of the people. It is obvious common sense

that a commission of such importance dealing with the future constitution of this country should have been constituted with general good-will. In spite of grave warnings, they persisted in constituting the Commission entirely excluding Indians therefrom and thereby alienating very large and important sections of public opinion. It is inevitable that the conclusions of the Commission are bound to suffer from the fatal infirmity of having been arrived at practically *ex parte* in the absence of the recognised political organisations and leaders of the Indian people and will not find acceptance.

#### Decision of the Liberal Party for Abstention Justified.

The Liberal Party has always accepted the Government of India Act and the authority of the Parliament to legislate in the matter of the future constitution. The Liberals were therefore not people who would range themselves against the Commission unless for substantial cause. After full deliberation, they were driven to the conclusion that abstention from taking any part in the work of the Commission was the only course open to them consistently with National self-respect. The reasons for this conclusion were very ably stated by your President of last year, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, and were embodied in the statement that the Federation issued at the conclusion of the last session and I do not propose to re-state them. Nothing has happened since our session at Bombay last year, that can alter our decision. We always made it clear that if Indians were included in the Commission or if the equality of status, authority and functions in substance and in form, were secured for what is given by the authorities the dignified name of "The Indian wing of the Commission," we were not averse to reconsidering the situation.

Government have however neglected and failed to do anything adequate to secure general co-operation. We have the lamentable spectacle of the Commission ushered into every important place with police protection to cheek and shroud from their view hostile demonstrations, leading in some places to conflict between the public and the police, in the course of which respected popular leaders like Lala Lajpat Rai and others were injured. In Lucknow the police grossly insulted a highly respected All-India leader, the Maharaja of Mahumadabad, who till lately was the Home Member of the U. P. Government. We of the Liberal Party have disapproved of hartals and black flag processions and other demonstrations of a like nature, but when popular resentment is aroused different people have different ideas and methods of giving expression to it. The bitter memories of these unfortunate events will last for a long time, and be a great obstacle in the way of harmonious understanding and co-operation between England and India which is very much to be desired. Sir John Simon and his colleagues of the Commission deserve sympathy for their unpleasant experiences. It is really unfair to them that Government have so hopelessly mismanaged the matter that the Commission would not get the valuable materials and assistance necessary to lead them to correct conclusions. The situation is not of their creation but they lay themselves open to criticism when they join in the propaganda to make out that the Commission is receiving co-operation from representative bodies and men and to belittle the volume and importance of the abstaining sections.

The claim made that the Commission is receiving a large measure of co-operation from representative men and bodies will not stand close examination. The Legislative Assembly which was at one time during the preliminary debates on the constitution of the Commission described in Parliament, as the body pre-eminently representing all India, rejected the proposal to elect the Central Committee to work with the Simon Commission. Attempts were made to depreciate the value of the decision of the Assembly on the ground that it was passed only by a majority of six. It is conveniently ignored that the minority consisted largely of the Government official block and nominated members. If the elected members were considered an overwhelming majority such members voted for abstention. The majority of elected Muslim members cast their vote for abstention. When the Assembly decided for abstention, its representative character was questioned. It was argued that the Assembly members were not in intimate touch with the people in the provinces and that the members of the Provincial Councils more truly

reflected the views of the masses who were for co-operation. Starting with this promise it is said that inasmuch as most of the Provincial Councils have appointed committees it is evident that the country as a whole is in favour of co-operation with the Commission. But, here again, it is conveniently forgotten that, in the Provincial Councils, if you eliminated the official block and the nominated members, in almost every province the majority of the elected members was against co-operation, and surely it is the elected members and not the official block and nominated members who can rightly claim to reflect the real public opinion. How unfounded is the claim that representative bodies and men have co-operated with the Commission is clear, if one considers by way of illustration, the bodies and men who appeared before the Commission in the Bombay Presidency. Any one with any acquaintance of the Presidency will have no hesitation in saying that those who submitted memoranda or appeared before the Commission, in no sense represented the views of the bulk of the people of the Presidency. One looks in vain in the list of those who sent memoranda, for the recognised representative bodies of standing in the Presidency, like the Bombay Presidency Association, the Indian merchants' Chamber, the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha, the Deccan Sabha, the Gujarat Sabha and others that can be mentioned. And what is true of Bombay is also true of other provinces.

It is to me wonderful how the Government of India and the British Cabinet do not yet realise the futility and tragedy of attempting to evolve and inaugurate a big and important step in the political advance of India in an atmosphere of such general dissatisfaction and strife. They are repeating in a very intensified degree the tragedy that surrounded the inauguration of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms. It should not be beyond their genius boldly to take hold of opportunities even now to restore harmony and solve the constitutional problem of India in close co-operation with all sections on public opinion and with general good-will which alone can secure the successful working of any scheme that may be devised.

#### **The All-Parties' Committee.**

In order to meet the deplorable situation created by Government, it was considered extremely desirable and necessary that all political parties should put their heads together and produce a generally agreed constitution and make united demand for the same being accepted by Parliament. If the political evolution of India is to be on satisfactory and stable lines, it is essential that conflicts between different parties and communities should as far as possible be eliminated and all disruptive tendencies and forces should be got rid of and a common national ideal should be created. It is only solidarity of Indian opinion that would tell. Those who organised the All Parties' Conference and Convention have rendered inestimable service to India. The able work done in this connection by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Chintamani has maintained and enhanced the reputation of the Liberal Party. That Conference and its Committee have done very valuable and patriotic work and the Report that has been produced by them is one entitled to a high place among state documents dealing with topics of such importance, by its fairness, clear and logical thinking, restraint and moderation and commendable statesmanship. It is a grand effort made to secure the greatest measure of agreement in the country and however much one may differ from some of its recommendations it should be received and considered with the greatest consideration. It need not be taken as the last word and as far as I can see various adjustments and modifications of its recommendation may become necessary to secure for it complete and universal acceptance; but such negotiations should be conducted in a friendly and helpful spirit by those who may not be prepared to subscribe to it fully. It need not evoke the criticisms and opposition that have been levelled at it in certain quarters, some of which is misinformed and is due to want of proper understanding of the real nature and implication of the proposals and principles underlying the Report.

The fundamental proposal and key stone of the Report is the demand of Dominion Status for India and it is a very happy augury that this proposal has now been accepted and adopted by the All-Parties' Convention without any reservations. While the Congress had at its Madras Session declared Indepen-

dence as its ultimate goal, a section has now declared that complete Independence outside the British Empire is their immediate goal. Curiously enough, some of those who declare Independence as their goal are prepared to join in the demand for Dominion Status with the reservation that thereby their liberty of action in working for complete Independence is not restricted and in the hope that the attainment of Dominion Status will make it more easy for them to attain Independence. The Congress is asked as a compromise to accept the formula that while reaffirming the Madras resolution for Independence, Dominion Status is acceptable as a common measure of agreement. In the alternative, the Congress is asked to subscribe at present to Dominion Status but with the ultimatum that if it is not given within a stated period, then Independence would be declared and non-co-operation started. To my mind, while every effort should be made to secure unity in politically minded India, such unity should not be a camouflage. Nothing makes for sound action in politics as does clarity of thought and avoidance of self-deception. Speaking for myself, I do not see how those whose immediate or ultimate goal is complete Independence, can have anything in common with those who want Dominion Status within the Empire. The whole outlook and methods of those who want Independence must in the very nature of things be different from those who want Dominion Status. Any nation or country that wants complete Independence takes measures first to achieve Independence and when it succeeds in securing Independence, it drafts and creates its own constitution. It is out of place for those who want Independence outside the Empire to join in drafting the constitution for Dominion Status and asking the British Parliament to grant such Dominion Status. Those who want Dominion Status within the Empire can not countenance the ultimatum mentioned above. Those who reaffirm Independence as their goal and threaten nonpayment of taxes cannot be honest believers in Dominion Status.

I venture to think that every reasonable mind should accept the goal of Dominion Status. As pointed out in the report of the Nehru Committee, what is needed is the transference of political power and responsibility from the people of England to the people of India and that essential object will be fully served by India becoming one of the Self-governing Dominions. At the Imperial Conference of 1926, the position of Self governing Dominions is described in the following terms :—

"They are autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations."

Dominion Status meets all National aspirations and carries with it the protection, safety and all other advantages of partnership in the most powerful Empire in the world.

It is sometimes objected that unless India is prepared to assume responsibility of its defence, both internal and external, it cannot claim Dominion Status. But this was never insisted upon as a condition in the case of Self-governing Dominions when they obtained that Status. Defence against internal disturbance was no doubt laid upon them, but no obligation of defence against external aggression was required to be taken up, and as regards naval defence the Imperial Government is still carrying the burden. India however, has been maintaining an army at a very heavy cost which is sufficient not only for her own purposes but also serves and is available for Imperial needs. It would indeed be strange, if England after thwarting and hampering India to learn and be ready for her own defence, were to urge a state of things which England herself had brought about, as a ground for withholding Dominion Status from India. The persistent neglect and refusal to give practical effect to schemes for Indianisation of the army within a reasonable time, including the virtual rejection of the Skeen Committee's Report only recently, are well known to all. What India wants and claims is the same autonomy in the sphere of military organisation and administration that is enjoyed by the Self-governing Dominions.



## COMMUNAL PROBLEM.

The most important problem that the Nehru Committee in its Report has attempted to solve is the communal problem. This question has assumed a fictitious importance far beyond its real merits. The principal communities concerned in this question are the Hindu and Mahomedan communities. The separatist principle was first recognised in 1909 and it was confirmed by the Lucknow Pact in 1916, whereby it was agreed that Mahomedans should have their own separate electorates and the numbers to be returned to the various Provincial Councils by such electorates and also to the Central Legislature were fixed with due regard to their numerical strength as well as other considerations. The Hindu and Mussalman leaders who were parties to this pact entered into it in the full hope that separate electorates would last only for some time and were to be confined only to the legislatures. They accepted separate electorates only as a means of dealing with a temporary aberration which was expected to vanish on the growth of national unity. Unfortunately, however, the separatist idea has spread like a wild weed. It has extended to the municipalities, and local boards, and has invaded in some places even the seats of learning. It has infected other communities and sections, Europeans Anglo-Indians, Sikhs, Non-Brahmins, depressed classes and others too numerous to mention. It has unfortunately extended to the region of public offices to such a degree that fitness, efficiency and needs of the State are no longer the principal considerations, with the inevitable result that the public services show a decline which must in its turn weaken and debase the national character. Some of the blighting effects of separate electorates might have been minimised if unfettered choice of candidates had been given to the communal electorates and option had been allowed to the minority community members to go into the general register if they so desired. The present rigid water-tight compartments system is very unfair to the members of the minority community themselves. Under the present system any enlightened Mahomedan of National outlook who may prefer to go into the general register and whom the Non-Muslim electors may desire to elect as their representatives are prevented from making any choice in the matter. Similarly, a Muslim electorate is prevented from electing as their representative a non-Muslim to whom they may have the completest confidence. Unbiased thought and large national view rising above petty personal considerations of providing jobs for members of any particular community, will make it evident that there is really no divergence of interest between the different communities. They are all subject to the same laws, same taxes, same disabilities and enjoy the same rights and privileges. A study of the proceedings of the Central Legislatures as well as the provincial Legislatures will reveal that during the seven years that have elapsed since the inauguration of the reforms in 1921 there has hardly been any occasion on which any legislation or measure affecting only a particular community was debated or that voting took place on purely communal lines.

The following observation of the Nehru Committee Report on the extremely undesirable effects of separate electorates give a true picture. It says: "Everybody knows that separate electorates are bad for the growth of a national spirit, but everybody perhaps does not realise equally well that separate electorates are still worse for a minority community. They make the majority wholly independent of the minority and its votes and hostile to it. Under separate electorates therefore the chances are that the minority will always have to face a hostile majority, which can always by sheer force of numbers override the wishes of the minority. Extreme communalists flourish thereunder and the majority community far from suffering actually benefits by it."

The correct ideal therefore is a general register of voters not taking into account birth, race or religion. All that any community should have and is entitled to is that, the constitution should secure to it fullest religious liberty and cultural autonomy. For any community that is backward special facilities should be provided for speeding up the education of the members of such community. Failing the acceptance of this correct ideal, general electorates

with reservation of seats for the minority and backward communities who enjoy at present separate electorates is the next best expedient. But such reservation of seats must be recognised only as a transitional stage between separate electorates and general electorates, for it is clear that such reservation of seats makes the community enjoying it steadily lose in self-reliance.

The fact is that the present situation in which the Mahomedan community want to cling to separate electorates as a valued privilege essential for their safety, has been created by want of trust and confidence between the majority and minority communities and that situation is exploited by those who can maintain their prominence only by perpetuating communalism. But whatever the causes and however undesirable the present state of things, you have to face the fact that the minority community has not that trust and confidence in the majority community which one would like to establish. I strongly think it is up to the majority community to be generous and to agree to make concessions to the furthest limit consistent with National interests, in order to wean back their erring brethren of the minority community. The Nehru Committee Report recommends the abolition of separate electorates and agrees as a transitional measure to the reservation of seats for the Muslim community in the Central Legislature and the Provincial Legislatures except Bengal and the Punjab, in proportion to their population, with the right to contest additional seats. As regards the Punjab and Bengal where the Muslim community is the majority community, it recommends general electorates without any reservation of seats. The facts collected and the arguments and reasoning of the Report in favour of these conclusions appear to be sound. But here again one has to face hard facts and it is a fact that although the proposals are acceptable to certain sections of the Muslim community, there are others who are not prepared to accept them. The only solution is further negotiations and adjustments.

It is further to be remembered that the solution of the communal problem presented by the Nehru Report is based on adult franchise. Speaking for myself, I venture to think that at this stage of India's political evolution, adult franchise is neither desirable nor safe. I am one of those who seriously doubt that the present low franchise has worked well. It is low enough although it brings in a small proportion of the population, but to lower it still more or to adopt universal suffrage without any property qualification would, I am convinced, be dangerous. The poverty and illiteracy of the large masses of the people raise very serious doubts of a proper exercise by them of the franchise and fears are entertained that they may appreciate merely the pecuniary value of their votes than its political significance. But whatever the franchise, it is desirable to my mind, to base it on the qualification of ownership or exercise of some calling and receipt of income liable to taxation in some form or another. To vest political power at one bound in this country, in the hands of masses of people with no stake and who therefore are not likely to appreciate the benefits of a stable and ordered Government, is under the present circumstances, I venture to think, not desirable. Adult franchise has come in England after nearly 100 years of political training and vast progress of education and material prosperity. When the Reform Act of 1832 was passed, only 3 per cent of the population was enfranchised. In 1867-68, the proportion was raised to 9 per cent and in 1884 to 16 per cent. But whether adult franchise is desirable or not desirable, it is not practical politics to proceed on the assumption that it will be granted. If that is so, a solution of the communal problem based on adult franchise would necessarily be required to be reconsidered and recast.

Speaking for myself, I would be prepared to concede to the Muslim community reservation of seats everywhere on reasonably generous proportion for a particular number of years in order to restore trust and confidence and to secure unity of demand for Dominion Status or for substantial advance towards it. At the end of such period either the reservation of seats should automatically disappear or the matter should be open to reconsideration and adjustment by the communities concerned. I do not think the majority community would in any way suffer by such concession.

If the system of reservation of seats is to be brought into existence for the Mussalmans, the same will have to be done with regard to other communities like

Europeans who have at present separate electorates as well as for those communities like the Maharattas who have at present reservation of seats.

It is not possible to deal within the limits of a presidential address with all the provisions which should form part of the new constitution. One can only indicate the general lines and principles on which the constitution should be based. A Declaration of Rights and the securing of all existing property rights on the lines indicated in the Nehru Report are essential. There is an overwhelming consensus of opinion in favour of provincial autonomy, but some people while demanding Provincial autonomy try to hedge it round by various safeguards and limitations, I advocate full provincial autonomy with transfer of all provincial subjects including Law and Order and I have no misgivings as to the result. Provincial autonomy should be real and any safeguards that may be considered desirable should as far as possible be provided in the Provincial machinery and constitution itself. I would deprecate the vesting of any extraordinary powers in the Governor of superseding the administration of any transferred subjects by the Ministers. There may be mistakes committed but it is only by committing mistakes and the electorate learning to visit such mistakes with their displeasure at the elections, that responsible government can thrive. Suitable safeguards against hasty action can however be provided by the creation if necessary of a Second Chamber constituted on a franchise which would secure among its members men of ripe and sound experience.

But any scheme of Provincial autonomy would not be productive of good results if no element of responsibility is introduced in the Central Government and the present structure of that Government remains unaltered. The present state of things there is one that demoralises both the Legislature and the Government. The legislature often acts in an irresponsible manner because it knows that the King's Government will be carried on and that the Government will see that effect is not given to such irresponsible acts of the legislature. On the other hand, Government get into the habit of not attaching that value to the opinion or vote of the legislature which they would otherwise do. The introduction of responsibility in the Central Government means for the present the introduction of dyarchy, as it will, I apprehend, be desirable for some time to keep at least foreign and political relations and the army as reserved subjects. I have no apprehension about dyarchy working satisfactorily in the Central Government as a transitional measure provided an atmosphere of goodwill is created. The failure of dyarchy in some provinces was due to exceptional causes.

The position of the Indian States and their relations with the Government of India when India becomes a self-governing Dominion are questions of great intricacy and difficulty but a proper solution acceptable to British India and the Indian States will have to be found. It is regrettable that at present the situation is befogged by considerable mistrust and misunderstanding on either side. It is a great mistake to suppose that all Indian States are misgoverned and represent absolute autocratic government. It is only the worst cases that come prominently to public notice and it is unfair from such cases to generalise as regards the rest. It is a misunderstanding to suppose that the Indian Princes are opposed to or want in any manner to obstruct the attainment of full Dominion Status by British India. Many of the enlightened rulers among them are as patriotic and feel as nationally as any of us do and are willing to help British India in attaining its goal. Some of them are prepared to introduce representative institutions in their States. It is also a misconception that Indian Princes by inviting the Butler Committee enquiry are trying to entrench themselves against any inroad on their authority by British India. The way in which their treaty rights and sovereignty have been dealt with in the past by the British Government whenever differences between them have arisen, made it necessary for them to have their position and rights vis-a-vis the British Government investigated and defined. It is equally a misapprehension on the other hand that British India wants in any manner to derogate from the independence and sovereignty of the Indian States and to make them in any way subservient to British India and the Indian legislatures. Efforts should be made

to evolve a scheme in which British India and the Indian States can march together for the prosperity and advancement of the whole country and with mutual trust and confidence make India as a whole take her proper place among the nations of the world. This can be done by discussion and negotiation between the representatives of British India and the Indian States.

Our trouble is with the extremists in all camps who make the task of adjustment and understanding by inspiring mutual trust and confidence, extremely difficult. We have extremists among the Hindus, among Mahomedans, among Nationalists and among the Europeans. It does not conduce to better understanding if one side describes Europeans who are trading in this country and have invested capital as mercenary exploiters and for the spokesman of Europeans to describe Indians as highwaymen ready to rob the Europeans who claim to be innocent travellers.

#### PUBLIC SAFETY BILL.

Before I conclude, I feel bound to draw the serious attention of all who are interested in the welfare and prosperity of this country, to the growing menace that is threatening not only the ordered progress of the country but the very foundation and existence of society and the State. There are indications which cannot be ignored that Communist ideas are being disseminated among the working classes and the ignorant agricultural population with the avowed object of subverting the present structure of society and ownership of property. The repeated and long continued strikes in important industrial centres which have very nearly ruined the staple industries of the country, are engineered not merely for the purpose of redressing the legitimate or supposed grievances and improving the condition of labour, but as part of a plan to break up the present order and structure of society and are subsidised partly by foreign funds. A party has come into existence who is openly proclaiming revolution and destruction of the present structure of society and ownership of property as its goal. It behoves Government and all right-thinking men to take all measures to stop this exploitation and misleading of the masses for revolutionary purposes before it is too late. In this connection, speaking personally, I regret the action of the Assembly in turning down the Public Safety Bill. One always deprecates all repressive legislation and is unwilling to clothe the Executive Government with power that can be misused but the Bill as it emerged from the Select Committee, had, I think, sufficient safeguards and they could have been further improved at the second reading stage by the Assembly.

The grounds on which the consideration of the Bill was opposed appear to me to be entirely unconvincing. It was said, why did not Government take measures earlier? But surely that is no ground for not taking any measures at all now. It was objected that it was useless dealing with non-Indians when Government were taking no steps to deal with Indians who may be doing greater mischief and Government were urged to take action against some Indian labour agitators under the discredited regulations of 1818 and 1827. The repressive laws committee urged in 1922-1923 the immediate repeal of those regulations and the Assembly and the whole country have unequivocally protested against the continuance on the Statute Book of those regulations that have been described as "Lawless Laws" under which various people and also the erstwhile ruler of an important Indian State are at present deprived of their liberty indefinitely without ever having been informed of the charges against them and without being given an opportunity of refuting such charges if any; and yet we find it seriously urged in the Assembly that blame attached to Government for not taking action under those Regulations against some agitators engineering labour strikes and that as Government can take action under those regulations no legislation was needed.

What we are suffering from, in our public life at present, I am afraid, is want of clear thinking and a serious lack of men willing to take the responsibility of saying what they know to be right. The intoxication of public applause and the fear of losing popularity appear to benumb the capacity of rational thinking and the courage to express one's real convictions.

Ladies and gentlemen, I have tried to place before you my views on some of

the questions which you will deal within this session. It may be that some of my views may not exactly coincide with yours. But of this I am sure that you will apply your minds earnestly to the questions you will be considering and that your collective wisdom will result in advancing the cause of our dear Motherland.

## Resolutions.

The second day's proceedings of the Federation commenced on the next day, the 31st DECEMBER, at half past twelve. All the resolutions were carried without opposition, the Madras contingent contributing largely to the speeches. Proceedings began with resolutions of condolence and sympathy put from the chair at the deaths of Lala Lajpat Rai and other liberal leaders.

### 1. Boycott of Commission.

Mr. J. N. Basu (Bengal) moved the following :—

"(a) The National Liberal Federation urges upon all Indians the imperative necessity of continuing the boycott of Simon Commission in full vigour; (b) Emphatically condemns police assaults committed in the name of peace and order which have marked the reception accorded by officials to the Simon Commission at certain places".

Mr. Basu said that the members of the Commission, however able they may be, cannot look at things Indian from the same point of view as we Indians do. Our boycott of the Commission is an indication of the real heart of the people.

### 2. Dominion Status.

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru moved :

"This Federation is strongly of opinion that the system of Government to be established in place of the present system should be the same as which prevails in the self-governing dominions which are equal members of the British Commonwealth of Nations and this step should be taken immediately. Any further delay and postponement is fraught with danger to the mutual relations of India and England".

He could say, said Sir Tej Bahadur in moving the resolution, without fear of contradiction that so far as many members of the Liberal party were concerned they offered to work the Montagu reforms knowing full well that they were incurring a great unpopularity among their countrymen. It did not lie in the mouth of any Government to say that Liberals did not give fair trial to the reforms. But the spirit which actuated Mr. Montagu in introducing those reforms was a very short-lived spirit. The moment Mr. Montagu left office, the India Office was a very different one and since then the action of the India Office had been very discreditable to British justice and statesmanship. Since then the position went on deteriorating until they found that the Government of Lord Irwin had placed themselves in a position of losing friends, public support and public sympathy. It was due, continuing Sir Tej Bahadur asserted, to the action of the Government and to their refusal to listen to the advice of their friends that so much extremism had grown in this country. Sir Tej Bahadur, proceeding, recalled the resolution moved in 1924 in the Legislative Assembly by Pandit Motilal Nehru. That resolution expressed not only the sentiments of this party but the sentiments of Liberals outside. It was a perfectly moderate and well reasoned resolution but the strongest opposition was offered by Government members and hair splitting was made between Dominion Status and responsible Self-Government.

If it was said that the Parliament never promised India Dominion Status but it was committed to responsible Self-Government, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru submitted with confidence that if British statesmen studied their own declarations and the declarations of the highest in the British Empire they would find that so far as British Statesmanship was concerned it stood committed to Dominion Status for India. Therefore, it came to many as a surprise when in the year 1924 or early in 1925 Lord Birkenhead made a famous speech in which he threw a challenge to the Indians to explain what they meant by "swaraj." Sir Tej regretted that none of the political parties took up that challenge so seriously then as they did at this

time. The challenge was taken up when a strong challenge was offered to nationalism, when a distinct insult was offered to India. That insult was offered when the Simon Commission was appointed. There was no option left to them as self-respecting Indians but to accept their challenge. There could be no denying the fact, continuing Sir Tej said, that the proposals put forward by the All-Parties Committee in the idea of Dominion Status carried with them the largest amount of agreement in this country.

Referring to the last portion of the resolution Sir Tej Bahadur begged of the audience not to take it as a threat. That was only a warning to the Government because when he attended the Convention at Calcutta he felt that there was a distinct cleavage between the younger generation of politicians in India and the older generation. Youngmen were thinking on different lines and even leaders of distinction like Pandit Motilal Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi were finding it difficult at the present moment to have their word accepted by their own followings unlike few years ago. It was said, Sir Tej Bahadur continued, that the Dominion Status idea was a very low idea, that it was not an idea which could arouse any enthusiasm among the younger generation. Sir Tej repudiated such a suggestion. The idea of Dominion Status had been growing until they found that in the Imperial Conference which met in London in 1927 Self-Governing Dominions were not separated and were not going to separate. It was because in their homes they felt that they were masters, because they felt that they were equal members of the Commonwealth, because they considered it expedient and necessary to remain members of the British Commonwealth. They might not grant Dominion Status, the speaker proceeded, to India but they could not prevent men running on the dangerous side. He felt perfectly certain that the younger generation was not prepared to bear and suffer the danger key of the situation lay in the hands of the Viceroy. If the Viceroy was going to entrench himself behind the advice of men who were not in touch with the country then he would say that he was living in a fool's paradise.

### 3. Nehru Report.

In the absence of Dr. Annie Besant, Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikari (Bengal) moved the following resolution :

"(a) This Federation accords general support of the report of the Nehru Committee and resolutions of the All-Parties Conference held at Lucknow in particular with reference to the establishment of complete provincial autonomy without second chambers and full responsible Government in the Government of India with such residuary powers as are not granted to provincial Governments ; (b) This Federation is further of opinion that if in addition to or in substitutions of the recommendations of the Nehru Committee a settlement of the problem of minorities is possible by agreement on any other basis, such should be accepted in the larger and more abiding interests of the country : (c) The Federation appoints the following committee to co-operate with the representatives of other organisations for settlement of communal question : (1) Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, (2) Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, (3) Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer, (4) Mr. J. N. Basu, Secretary".

### 4. Indian States.

Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer (Madras) moved :

"While in general agreement with the recommendations of the Nehru Committee in regard to Indian States this Federation welcomes the suggestion made recently in some quarters that the representatives of British India and Indian States should meet to discuss their points of view to arrive at a conclusion which will be acceptable to both parties. This Federation while appreciating the efforts made by some States to introduce representative Government is strongly of opinion that more systematic and liberal measures should be taken to introduce responsible Government to associate the people with the administration of their own States.

This concluded the proceedings and the Federation dispersed.

# The All-India Muslim League.

CALCUTTA—26TH—30TH DECEMBER 1928.

The twentieth session of the All-India Muslim League opened on the 26TH DECEMBER 1928 at the Albert Hall, Calcutta, the attendance being confined to delegates and a very few select visitors only.

Delegates had come from all parts of India, and prominent among those who were present were Maulana Azad, Dr. Kitchlew, Dr. Alam, Mr. Abdul Haroon, Mr. Yakub Hassan, Syed Murtaza, Mr. Ismail Chowdhury, Mr. Fazlul Huq, Mr. Barkat Ali, Mr. Brelvi, Rana Phiroze Din, Sir Ali Imam, Mr. Sherwani, Maulvi Zaffar Ali, Mr. Abul Matin Chowdhury, Mr. Akram Khan, Mr. Mujibar Rahaman, Mr. Tamijuddin Khan, Mr. Wahed Hossain, Mr. Mujid Bux, Maulvi Jalaluddin, Khan Bahadur Alimuzamman and Mr. Siddiq. Sir Abdur Rahim was not present nor did the Ali Brothers attend the meeting.

## The Welcome Address.

The proceedings commenced with recitation from the Quoran after which Maulvi Abdul Karim, Chairman of the Reception Committee, delivered a long speech for a hour and quarter. In the course of his speech the Chairman said :—

“At the dawn of a new and significant orientation of the conception of India's political and economic freedom, and on the eve of momentous changes in the constitution and administration of India, it is not a light task to stand under the portals opening on to the future destiny of our country, and point an unerring finger at the right and straight road which India should take in order to achieve self-determination and national well-being in the speediest and surest manner.”

He continued that upon the results of their deliberation depended the future of the Muslims and to a large extent the destiny of India itself. It was extremely to be regretted therefore that some forces were at work to divide the political strength of the Muslims of India at a time when vital interests, both of the community and country required that there should be solid unity.

The Chairman was afraid that people had been fighting over a shadow before getting the substance. Until the required political rights were actually secured the question of their division could not arise. Franchise and electorates were only to be considered in reference to responsible self-Government. They had no value or significance of their own until this was attained. The primary and joint aim of all parties for the present should therefore be the attainment of Government of the people by the people for the people. When this was secured, he did not think there would be any insurmountable difficulties regarding the adjustment of the claims of the different communities.

## Appeal for Communal Harmony.

Moulvi Abdul Karim warned that failure to create inter-communal harmony meant perpetuation of India's bondage. Referring to the political aspirations of the intelligentsia of India, he asked : “Was it too much to hope that the British people would realise their responsibility and avert, before it was too late, the dire consequences of their policy and raise India to the position of a self-governing colony; or would they drive them in utter despair of British good sense and good faith to set themselves to work to find means active or passive, open or secret to “get rid of their European rulers.”

The Chairman described in detail the process by which Britishers were exploiting India and draining her of her wealth, and said that change of Government was also necessary to relieve the economic pressure on the masses brought about by this exploitation.

## The Simon Enquiry.

Referring to the Simon Commission, he said that British policy in India was definitely committed to progressive realisation of responsible Government; but he feared that it would be a calamity if sentence were pronounced by the Commission on India's political destiny without proper representation of her case, and that it was too late in the day to doubt India's fitness for democratic institutions when Turkey and Persia had already attained them without Western tutelage for a century and half. He did not agree either with the people who thought the Nehru Report to be sacrosanct or with its detractors. He thought that it was a good basis for final deliberation and effective presentation of India's joint demand. But resolutions and constitutions could not achieve anything unless they were backed by real abiding unity of hearts and singleness of purpose.

Proceeding, Moulvi Abdul Karim observed that for economic and cultural autonomy, Dominion Status gave India as it had given all other Dominions in the British Commonwealth all the scope they needed for the present. It would therefore be unwise to fritter away their limited national energy at the mere name and chimera of Independence.

Speaking on the communal aspect of the Nehru Report the Chairman said: Mussalmans wanted adequate and effective representation in the Legislatures, for their past experience had shown that unless reserved and special electorates were provided for, an adequate number of able Mussalmans could not be returned to the Council and they would be swamped in a common joint electorate. Adult suffrage would of course ensure electoral fairplay, but if this was not provided Bengal Muslims would demand representation in proportion to their population.

## The Presidential Address.

The Maharaja of Mahmudabad was cheered as he rose to deliver his presidential address. He spoke for about seventeen minutes and was heard with respect and attention. The following is the text:—

"Gentlemen, An annual session of the All-India Muslim League was never held in the last two decades under conditions of greater possibilities than to-day. The air is thick with expressions of views from all quarters. Differences of opinion there are and there will be, but no school of thought desires to stand still. The differences relate to the degrees of changes only. In the circumstances our business in the present session is to decide and decide wisely as to what these changes should be. I invite your attention to concentrate on this and bring to bear upon it your best endeavour to put before the country a policy which may be acceptable not only to yourselves, but to the whole of India.

"Before proceeding to the examination of the subjects before us I desire to refer to the great loss our community has suffered in the demise of the late Right Hon'ble Mr. Ameer Ali. Whatever his political views might have been no Indian could deny that his was a towering personality and that he ranked amongst the giants of India's sons. His deep learning, his marvellous literary ability, his burning patriotism and his fervent devotion to Islamic cause leave behind him imperishable memories. We mourn him to-day, but his example of a life of great usefulness and service remains a living force".

The President also expressed his condolence and sympathy at the death of Lala Lajpat Rai whose death at the present political crisis of the country was an irreparable loss. He then continued:—

"Gentlemen, I do not propose to enter into a minute examination of the various views that have been advanced touching the changes that should take place in the system of the government of our land. I will content myself with some of the cardinal principles only. To my mind these stand out under three heads. There is a party that demands "Independence" that is to say, the severance of the British connection. Then there is a larger group that pins its faith on Dominion Status within the British Commonwealth. The third question is a question of supreme moment that affect and materially affects the realisation either of the two political concepts mentioned above. I mean the



conflict of communal basis and prejudices. I refrain from using the expression communal interests advisably, for I do not believe that there is any real and genuine interest of any community, be it a minority or a majority, that is not a national interest. No national aspiration is worth the name if it disregards the interests of any community in our vast country. All castes, creeds and communities have to pool their resources together not only to ask for the introduction of Swaraj, but what is more important to deserve it. For a sane and sensible Indian politician it is impossible to visualise an Indian democracy which has in it the taint of sectarianism, and the majority, because it has the weight and power of majority, to descend to the lower level of dominating a minority is a negation of the principles of equal citizenship which is after all the very essence of a democratic rule. The apprehensions and misgivings of a minority are not unnatural and it is an obligation cast upon the majority to remove such doubts and fears. No less on the other hand it is incumbent on a minority not to formulate terms that are excessive and unreasonable trenched behind a communalism which is short-sighted enough to block reforms in which it will itself be a participant. At no time in the history of India there was a call for unity more insistent than now. The solution lies in sweet reasonableness in the majority and the minority alike; both have to make some sacrifices and have to be mutually generous. A common national mentality is not obtainable on any other basis. I commend this solution to your consideration before I deal with the three subjects in their proper sequence.

#### Independence.

"As to "Independence" all I have to tell you is that political theories, however idealistic, yield no beneficial results when divorced from actualities. The application of the doctrine of independence in the sense of severance of British connection is to my mind a hopelessly unworkable proposition. India's place in the British Commonwealth is a place of undeniable security. Her association with the British Commonwealth is a valuable asset and in my judgment it will be a folly to destroy this precious commodity with our own hands. It is my conviction that there is plenty of room for the growth, development and expression of Indian nationalism within the ambit of India's connection with England. To my mind to raise the cry of independence before the country without examining its implications is not statesmanship. Indian nationalism is yet nascent and it should not be forgotten that there must be laborious decades before it to reach a sturdy manhood. Can it be said that India has reached this stage when her existence will not be imperilled by isolation? Stern realities cannot be ignored. Classes and communities claiming advantages for themselves do not present a picture of political perfection. Who can deny that the air of our country is not rent by jarring claims? Can independence be preached by people who have not yet learned to think in the terms of true nationalism? What sort of constitution is to be planned on the basis of independence for people who have not yet learned even the first lesson in the art and practice of national defence? Apart from ethical and legal technical ties, to my mind the cry of independence is a cry in the wilderness and I would implore you to enter your emphatic protest against such a suicidal proposal in the present circumstances of India.

"There is yet an additional reason for brushing aside the suggestion of 'Independence.' It lies in the fact that Dominion Status as contained and defined in the Nehru Report gives us all the rights of citizenship, all the incidence of undiluted democracy and all the requisites of political freedom that 'Independence' could confer. Adult suffrage, Central and Provincial Governments responsible to the Legislatures with free and full control of the departments of national defence, foreign affairs and the relations with Indian States guaranteeing to the latter all privileges and dignities are in all conscience sufficient foundation for building up a free Commonwealth of India. If those conditions of Dominion Status are obtained it is incomprehensible why the vexed question of 'Independence' is at all raised. In this connection it has to be remembered that the Nehru Report lays great emphasis on the scheme of constitution embodied therein to be adopted in its entirety. If the scheme

is cut and clipped it will be definitely open to all who subscribe to it to refuse to accept its mutilation and treat the disfiguration as a rejection of the national demand. I invite you, gentlemen, to give your whole-hearted support to the Dominion Status insisted upon in the Nehru Report.

"As regards the adjustment of the differences between community and community with the classes I venture to commend to your consideration one cardinal principle. Approach the subject in the spirit of broad-mindedness. As far as I can see the differences between the Muslim minority and the Hindu majority have narrowed themselves down to issues that are few and not essentials of any first principles. Reservations of seats in proportion to population in provinces where the Muslim is in the majority or whether the constitution should be unitary or federal or the proportion of reservation in the Central Legislature are points that are capable of settlement by friendly negotiation. The door for this is open in the Convention that is holding its sittings here in Calcutta. You can send your plenipotentiaries with power to conclude terms with the Convention. There will be a sitting to-morrow and you should proceed to elect your plenipotentiaries to-day so that no time may be lost and you may make your great contribution to the evolving and shaping of a constitution for the free Commonwealth of India acceptable to all political parties. Go forth, I beg of you, not in the spirit of stiff-necked bargaining, but in the spirit of compromise and comradeship. Should you be pleased to appoint your plenipotentiaries let me wish them god-speed and strength to come to an agreement and thus uphold the honour of Islam and India".

#### Annual Report of the League.

Dr. Kitchlew, Secretary of the League, then presented his report which on Mr. Sait Abdul Haroon's motion he read to the House as it had not been circulated.

Dr. Kitchlew in his report of the year's activity said that after the disaffiliation of the Shafi section, the Punjab Moslem League was again formed, and had taken part actively in the public life of the Punjab. The Bombay Provincial Committee which had become defunct, was also revived and Assam, which never had a Provincial Muslim League was organised into one during the year and was affiliated to the All-India Muslim League. All their provincial branches had been wide awake. The Shafi section in the Punjab had also not been idle, and presented a memorandum to the Simon Commission containing views which, however, did not have the approval of the rest of the Muslims of the country. This League had boycotted the Commission, and decided to draw up a constitution. Though the League as a body had not sent their delegates to the All-Parties' Conference, Lucknow, prominent members of the League had taken part in that Conference, in their individual capacity. The League was called upon in this session to elect delegates to the Convention.

During the year three meetings of the Council of the League were held, and a fourth could not have quorum. He further pointed out that the sub-committee which was to reconsider the constitution of the League could not meet owing to the absence in Europe of two prominent members, Messrs. Jinnah and Mahomed Ali.

One important matter was the redistribution of provinces in the League Constitution according to linguistic and cultural basis, and the setting up of electorates on the basis of both direct and indirect election under the League Constitution, so that people in the villages might get proper training in the electoral system to be useful for the future.

Dr. Kitchlew made a powerful appeal for funds as the entire propaganda work had suffered for want of money and they were closing the year with over Rs. 100 on the wrong side.

Mr. Fazlul HUQ recalled the period ten years back when the Maharaja of Mahmudabad presided over the League session in Calcutta. The speaker heard the same appeal for funds, and was sorry to find that in this decade, the Muslim League, far from making progress, had actually gone down, compared with the Congress. He thought that if the leaders put zeal in their business, funds would be forthcoming. Mr. Fazlul Huq suggested that the

report be circulated before adoption, but on being put vote the report was adopted without any change. Before adjourning the League elected the Subjects Committee, which met in the afternoon to draft resolutions and propose delegates for the All-Parties Convention.

#### CALCUTTA—27TH DECEMBER 1928.

The League resumed its second sitting on Thursday the 27th December. Before the proceedings commenced the League adopted resolutions mourning the death of Mr. Ameer Ali and Lala Lajpat Rai.

#### Delegation to All-Parties Convention.

Mr. M. C. Chagla (of Bombay) moved that the following gentlemen be appointed delegates to represent the League at and take part in the deliberations of the Convention. These delegates will take into consideration and attach due weight to the views on the communal question explained to the Subjects Committee and the open session of the League, and will endeavour to bring about an adjustment of the various outstanding questions between the Hindus and Musalmans arising out of the Nehru Report. These delegates will report the result of their labours to the League by 28th or 29th for the League to take its decision thereon. The following gentlemen formed the deputation:—

Maharaja Saheb of Mahmudabad, Mr. M. A. Jinnah, Dr. Kitchlew, M. C. Chagla, Malik Barkat Ali, Abdul Hamid, Majibur Rahaman, Dr. Mahmood, Messrs. Hissamuddin, Akram Khan, Zafar Ali Khan, Seikh Yakub Hassan, Ghazi Abdur Rahaman: Abdulla Brelvi, Tassaduq Ahmad Khan, Sherwani, Khaliquzzaman, Nawab Liaquat Khan, Majubar Ali, Shah Mohamad Zubairy and Abdul Karim.

Mr. Chagla said that the Nehru Report had been before the country for over three or four months and a good deal of thought and attention had been devoted to that subject. A large number of Musalmans had expressed their opinion on the subject and that many meetings had been called by Provincial Leagues and other bodies to express their views on the subject. The Convention was meeting here to consider the resolution adopted at Lucknow based on the Nehru Report.

The Convention would have concluded its deliberations before but on the representation made by some members on behalf of the Moslem League and taking into consideration the fact that it was impossible for the League to be represented at the Convention, the deliberations of that body had been postponed until that day in order to enable the League to send its representatives to take part in the deliberations of the Convention.

What the speaker asked the League was to adopt a resolution whereby they would be able to go on behalf of the League and to take part in the deliberations of the Convention. As to what the delegation would do and what was the line of action it would take and its attitude to wards the various questions which would come up for discussion before that body, it was for the League to suggest. The most important fact was that they had committed themselves to a definite policy at their last session held in Calcutta last year. There they had laid down in clear terms as to what was the constitution that they as Musalmans demanded. After that All-Parties met and prepared a report called the Nehru Report. As members of the All-India Moslem League what they had got to consider was to what extent had the Nehru Report met so far as their proposals were concerned. The first and primary duty of their delegation would be to compare carefully the proposals made in the Nehru Report with the proposals put forward by them in December last year. If they carefully considered the Nehru Report and their resolutions passed last year they would come to the conclusion that it was only in two or three respects the Nehru Report differed from their proposals. It would be for the delegates to consider whether the modifications proposed by the Nehru Committee were more advantageous to the Moslem interests than the proposals already put forward by them or how far it safeguarded their rights and interests.

Mr. Chagla continuing said that at Calcutta last year they demanded that there should be reservation of Moslem seats according to their population in the Provinces. In the interests of the Mussalmans, he said that seats should be

reserved whether they were in a minority or in a majority. The Nehru Report did not give them a reservation of seats in the Provinces of the Punjab and Bengal. It should be for their delegates to consider whether that alteration was to their benefit or was detrimental to them. The Nehru Report did not give them reservation of seats but as a substitute they had an adult suffrage.

Mr. Chagla said that the position that their delegates were expected to take was whether it was more beneficial to Mahammadans to have reservation of seats in the Punjab or in Bengal without adult suffrage or whether it would be better for them to have adult suffrage without reservation of seats.

Mr. Chagla assured the League that they were running into risk in sending their representatives because they would not ignore the resolutions passed in Calcutta last year. It was for the League either to ratify all those terms that would be arrived at the Convention or to reject them.

The resolution was seconded by Nawab Ismail Khan.

Malik Barkat ALI in supporting said that this was a final resolution in the true sense. It appeared to him that so far as this resolution was concerned the discussion of the Nehru Report was out of question for the simple reason that this League had not yet announced its final verdict on various matters that were included in the Report. The League did not stand committed in the words of the resolution to any particular creed or any particular recommendation.

#### An Amendment.

Haji Abdulla Haroon moved the following amendment: "That this meeting of the All-India Moslem League appoints a Committee to examine the Nehru Report in all its aspects and to submit a report to the League as to whether it contains sufficient safe-guard and interest for the Mahomedan Community".

The amendment was seconded by Mufti Mohamed Sadig.

Mr. Zaffar Ali Khan opposed the amendment. He said that there was a difference between the mentality of Hindus and Mahammadans. The Hindus, he said, differed among themselves genuinely and sincerely but there was a section amongst Mahammadans whom he described as toadies who differed between themselves with wrong motives. This gave rise to a good deal of indignation amongst the members of the audience and there was disorder in the house for some time.

#### A Breeze.

Mr. Jinnah rose to a point of order and objected to what he called the "unparliamentary" language used by Mr. Zaffar Ali and asked him to withdraw the expression used by him.

Mr. Zaffar Ali refused to withdraw his remarks and repeated what he said once more. He maintained that he would prove his statement.

Mr. Jinnah said that it was not desirable for a member to make serious allegations against a certain section of Mahammadans.

Mr. Jinnah next requested Mr. Haroon not to press for his amendment and explained that they had been discussing this question since the year 1925. Every man who had taken interest in the political life of this country knew very well as to what the decisions were. Mr. Chagla had already pointed out the difference existing at the present moment between the proposals that had been formulated by the Calcutta resolution and the Nehru Report. He said that under the circumstances they had not adopted any anwise course on this matter. If they did not allow their delegates their case would not be represented at the Convention.

#### Resolution Withdrawn.

Mr. Haroon pointed out that he moved a similar resolution in the Subjects Committee which was negatived. They had selected 20 members of one school and he suspected that this was not the way that the schools could be represented. Many of the nominees had already expressed their views supporting the Nehru Report. If he found that members of both schools were represented in the Committee he would withdraw his resolution.

Mr. Haroon subsequently withdrew his resolution amidst cheers.

Mr. Azizul Huq moved the amendment that the Committee be composed of fifty members representing each Province in India.

Moulvi Nurul Haq Chaudhury seconded the amendment.

Mr. Chagla explained the position more minutely and clearly and said that it was not possible to represent all schools in the Committee. The Committee, which he proposed was a representative one and they would put their heads together and bring about a compromise with the other side; the larger the number, the more difficult was the problem.

Mr. Jinnah moved that the names of the following three gentlemen be added to the list prepared by Mr. Chagla to make the Committee a representative of all provinces: Mr. Sayed Kayam Shah (of North-Western Frontier Provinces); Mr. Fayez Nur Ali (of Assam); Mr. Azizul Huque of Bengal.

Mr. Chagla accepted the amendment. The House accepted the resolution as amended and the other amendments were lost. The League adjourned.

#### CALCUTTA—29TH DECEMBER 1928.

On this day there was rather a stormy meeting of the League. A few more members from Bengal led by Messrs. Fazlul Haq, Nurul Haq Chaudhury and H. S. Surhawardy attended the meeting. There was a heated discussion over the question as to whether the League should send their representatives to the All-Parties Conference of the Mussalmans at Delhi organised by Sir Muhammad Shafi. Disorder prevailed when Mr. Nurul Haq Chaudhury made a complaint that many members of the League who had every right to attend the meeting and vote on the resolutions had been refused admission tickets by the office of the Secretary. Mr. Jinnah, the retiring President of the League, assured all that if any such thing had happened he would like to get the meeting adjourned for some time to enable those intending members to attend it.

#### Boycott of Delhi Conference.

Mr. Chagla moved:—"The League regrets that it cannot accept the invitation of the General Secretary of the All-Parties Muslim Conference to send representatives to it as the League is strongly of opinion that it would be disastrous to Muslim interest if rival and "ad bloc" organisations of the nature of the Conference were set up at every crisis in the history of the community. The League feels that it was the duty of the patriotic Muslims to rally round the League at this important juncture to decide what attitude the Mussalmans should take about the impending constitutional reforms. The League is further of opinion that the constitutional procedure of the Conference as outlined in the letter of the Secretary of the Conference is not likely to enable the Conference to serve any useful purpose or assist the Muslim community in arriving at a definite conclusion."

Mr. Chagla said that they had an All-India institution of their community which was the All-India Muslim League. People of all shades of opinions could join the League and discuss about the future political programme of the country. What then was the necessity for starting a rival organisation and to convene the Conference? Only last year the All-India Muslim League had passed a resolution foreshadowing what in its opinion the future constitution of India should be and how to preserve the rights of the minority. The Conference and the invitation was the greatest possible insult to the League. The Conference suggested that the League would not be able to discharge its duties impartially and properly. The platform of the League was open to all classes of political opinions. The oppositions might come and try to influence the League in favour of their views. What was the need for an All-Parties Conference? Every time in the history of their community a section of Mussalmans who had divergence of opinion with the rest would start rival organisation which was pernicious for the interests of the community itself. They would be signing the death-warrant of their League if they would accept the invitation and send representatives to the Conference. The Conference was an insult to the League inasmuch as it suggested that the League did not represent the views of the whole Mussalman community. He could understand a Muslim, continued Mr. Chagla, saying that he did not believe in Dominion Status but in complete Independence and for that reason not joining the League. But he wanted to ask the convenors o

the Conference, everyone who believed in Dominion Status, what prevented them from joining the League. The plea of the necessity of a united front had been raised by the convenors of the Conference. But he would accuse those big men of having caused a rift amongst the Mussalmans. If they accepted the invitation and supported the Conference thereby they would make any political advance of the Mussalmans impossible. Let them rally round the League which was the parent body of their community; let them unite and fight. They might win or lose. But if they could continue the fight they were sure to win in the long run.

#### Mr. Saddiq's Counter Resolution.

Mr. Saddiq moved a counter resolution suggesting that with a view to bringing peace and compromise amongst the Mussalmans to present a united form in the future constitution of India the All-India Muslim League should send their representatives to the All-Parties Muslim Conference at Delhi. He said that the Conference was not of any particular party but of all the parties. In this connection he would like to say that even though the All-Parties Convention at Calcutta invited 50 of them they themselves settled to send only twenty. They had seen on the previous evening that all the amendments moved by Mr. Jinnah formulating the minimum demands of the Mussalmans in the All Parties Convention had been summarily rejected. Only four or five Hindus had voted in favour of those amendments. When they had been kicked out by others was it self-derogatory for them to go to the convenors of the Conference who were their co-religionists for mutual consultation and understanding?

Mr. Fazlul Haq supported the resolution of Mr. Saddiq. He appealed to the House not to let it go out to the Muslim world that the Muslim League had rejected the invitation of the All-Parties Muslim Conference because the former had difference of opinion with the convenors of the latter.

The President, the Maharaja of Mahmudabad, delegated his Presidentship to Mr. Jinnah so that he might express his views on the question. He said that if any good work had been done by any bad man the work ought to be appreciated. But they must be convinced that good work had been done. So first of all they were to see what the Muslim All-Parties Conference at Delhi was going to do or what they intended to do. The All-India Muslim League was the parent representative body of the Mussalmans. They were to realise what the Conference was going to do and for that purpose they were to look at the trend of mind of its convenors. The Conference had been called to throw the League backward. It was therefore against their self-respect, their prestige and against their fundamental principle to accept the invitation of those who were professedly against themselves. If those of the Conference would do anything against the League or its principles he would like to say that the All-India Muslim League was the only representative Muslim organisation and as such the League would rise to the occasion.

#### Mr. Chagla's Resolution Carried.

The resolution of Mr. Chagla being put to vote was carried by overwhelming majority. Just at that time Mr. Nurul Haq Chaudhury drew the attention of the President to his complaint that many members of the League had been debarred from taking part into the meeting as tickets had been refused to them. Speaking of himself he said that he was given an admission ticket only when he had paid Rs 12. He would ask whether payment of such money was a condition precedent for members to attend the meetings.

Mr. Jinnah, the retiring President of the League, said that according to the rules of the League any member whose name had been struck off the list was entitled to come to the meetings and vote even in he was in arrears of his subscription. That being so he wanted to know whether any member had been actually prevented from coming into the meeting.

Mr. H. S. Surhawardy said that in view of the complaint of Mr. Nurul Haq Chaudhury about the payment of money there had been a general idea amongst the members of the League in Calcutta that to go to the meeting meant to pay

Rs. 12. He asked Mr. Jinnah to go one step further and declare his assurance which should be widely circulated amongst the members.

Mr. Jinnah said that anybody who had knowledge to understand the rules and regulations of the League could understand that fact. If any one misled the members it was his duty to drive away that mis-apprehension. However, he would like to ask the President to adjourn the meeting for an hour to enable the members to come to the meeting and give votes on the resolution if they so desired. Mr. Saddiq at this stage withdrew his counter resolution and the original resolution of Mr. Chagla was taken as passed. The League then adjourned.

### CALCUTTA—30TH DECEMBER 1928.

On this day the session of the League which was being held for the last five days was adjourned on a motion of Mr. Jinnah. The session was fixed to take place at 8 a.m. in the morning. But till 10 a.m. the business of the session could not be commenced for want of a quorum. The oppositionists led by Messrs. H. S. Surbawardy and Fazlul Haq were absentees from the meeting. In the absence of the Maharaja of Mahmudabad Mr. Jinnah presided over the deliberations of the meeting. After two resolutions, one expressing sympathy with His Majesty King Amanullah of Afghanistan and the other demanding reconsideration of certain clauses of the Bengal Tenancy Amendment Act were passed, Mr. Jinnah moved from the Chair :

#### The Adjournment Motion.

"The sessions of the All-India Moslem League do stand adjourned and the Council of the League is hereby instructed to summon the adjourned session at such place and time as they may consider suitable before the end of May 1929."

He said that they had considered their position very carefully and settled to adjourn the session for the time being. He, however, assured all that personally he would make his best endeavours to call the adjourned session at an early time when they would be able to consider their position more carefully and to come to a definite decision over the matter which was of the most vital and paramount importance to the Mussalmans. He had many reasons to move the adjournment motion and he was sure all those reasons were of very cogent and assuring nature. The adjournment motion was carried.

#### Sympathy for King Amanullah.

Malik Barkat Ali moved :—"This meeting of the All-India Moslem League places on record its sincere and warm appreciation of the splendid efforts that are being made by His Majesty King Amanullah Khan to make Afghanistan a great and progressive country and on the present occasion when a number of rebels whose action this meeting condemns are creating troubles offers its heartiest sympathy to His Majesty in his endeavours to quell the disturbances and trust that His Majesty having crushed the rebellion will succeed in his desire to place Afghanistan in the front rank of the nations of the world."

In moving the resolution he said that there was no necessity for him to discuss in detail about the particular steps taken by His Majesty King Amanullah for the advancement of the country. But there could not be any doubt that he had been doing all that he could to bring Afghanistan at par with the other civilised and progressive nations in the world. The resolution was supported by Dr. Alam and carried unanimously.

#### Bengal Tenancy Bill.

Mr. Azizzul Haq moved :—"The All-India Moslem League is emphatically of opinion that the provisions relating to the grant of further rights to the landlords of Bengal in the Bengal Tenancy Amendment Bill by the introduction of pre-emption and Salami are extremely detrimental to the interests of the rural population in the Presidency of Bengal and the League requests His Excellency the Governor of Bengal to return the Bill to the Bengal Legislative Council for its re-consideration of the aforesaid two points and further appeals to His Excellency the Governor General for withholding his assent to the Bill till these two provisions are re-considered by the Council."

Mr. Nurul Haq Chaudhury rising on a point of order enquired whether, when the aim of the League was the establishment of independence in the country, the resolution making appeals to the Governor and the Viceroy was in order. Mr. Jinnah the President ruled that the resolution was quite in order. The resolution was carried.

#### Informal Conference.

After the adjournment of the session Mr. Jinnah invited the members of the League Council to an informal conference to consider the situation created by the Convention refusing his demands which formed the demands of the Mussalmans.

# The All-India Khilafat Conference

The session of the All-India Khilafat Conference was opened on Tuesday the 25TH DECEMBER 1928 in the Khilafat pandal at Halliday Park, Calcutta, under the presidency of Mr. Mahomed Ali. About 500 delegates attended from all provinces excepting the Panjab and Bengal, the election of the delegate of which two committees was declared null and void by the Working Committee of the All-India Khilafat Committee in its meeting on the 24th December for technical irregularities.

Maulana Abdul Rauf, Chairman of the Reception Committee, delivered a long Urdu address covering about twenty pages of printed matter. In welcoming the delegates he said that Islam had taught them to worship one God and to give up the worship of other gods.

## The Presidential Address.

Mr. Mahomed Ali, President of the Conference, delivered an extempore speech in Urdu lasting for more than four hours. In his speech he vehemently criticised the Nehru Report itself as well as many of the prominent authors of it. He said that he was a member of the Indian National Congress, its Working Committee, the All-India Moslem League and he had come to the Khilafat Conference to express his views on the important political issues of the time which should have the serious attention of the whole Moslem Community.

Mr. Ali said that both himself and Dr. Besant were under the internment of the Government and Dr. Besant was released to preside over a session of the Congress perhaps because the Government thought her to be less dangerous than himself as she wanted at that time Dominion Status. Whatever he did he did as a servant of God and the Prophet. He did not care whether this community or that, this group or that, this party or that would like it. He was not for Moslem majority nor for Moslem minority.

In the All-Parties Convention he had said that India should have complete independence and there was no communalism in it. Yet he was being heckled at every moment and stopped during his speech at every step. But he did not care for their heckling and he pressed for what he thought right for the Hindus and the Moslems, the Parsis, the Christians, the Blacks and the Whites and for God.

To-day, Mr. Ali said, they want to have the whole world admit every letter of the Nehru Committee Report. To-day Mahatma Gandhi and Sir Ali Imam would be sitting under one flag and over them would fly the flags of the Union Jack. The Nehru Report had at its preamble admitted the bondage of servitude and Pandit Motilal's resolution was the worst of all. The report was there and it was for them to discuss it and to adopt or reject it as they liked. The Nehru Committee told them that for the freedom of the country this was good. They said that it was good also for the Punjab, also for this Province or that. To-day Pandit Motilal, the Maharaja of Mamudabad, Mr. Chintamani, Sir Ali Imam and others were in the same camp but only recently Pandit Motilal had been sent to jail, his newspaper had been suppressed and the Maharaja of Mamudabad was responsible for this. If to-morrow Jawaharlal were on the gallows Pandit Motilal would be responsible for that.

At this stage Mr. Mahomed Ali declared that Mr. Srinivas Iyenger with about 120 members had walked out of the Subjects Committee meeting that evening and that there were disorder, confusion and assaults over the matter. This news was evidently received with acclamation in the Conference and there was uproarious cries. Mr. Shankar Ali evidently exalting over the news said that those who had led the Moslem to quarrel had been made to quarrel among themselves by God.

Continuing the President said that Dr. Ansari, the President of the Convention, was a mere puppet in the hands of Pandit Motilal and that Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta had put on the same garb. Only the other day they had passed a resolution for Swaraj within the British Government if possible and without if necessary and the time had come for them to say that Swaraj must be without the British Empire and yet he said it was freedom. The link was nothing but a missing link. Freedom and Dominion Status were widely divergent things. The veto of the Viceroy was the missing link. That power of veto would poke them and goad them just as the cartman goaded the bullocks who had the yoke on their shoulders. He would ask Malaviyaji, Dr. Moonje, Pandit Motilal and others why they were differentiating between races. The real question was not of birth, or caste or creed. It was the question of self-respect and conscience which should be held above



all things. He had little to say to Malaviyaji or Dr. Moonje but he would ask Sir Ali Imam as to how was he speaking the truth when he said that in case of India's severance from British protection she might be well invaded by the Afghans.

About communalism he said: "People who run down the Ali Brothers and the Khilafat Committee as communalist and pride themselves on their nationalism—let them know what we communalists think and how low we think of their nationalism. It is my belief that God made men and the Devil made nations. You condemn religion because you say it leads to holy war, jihad, and crusades, but count the lives that were lost in the holy wars of Islam and crusades of Christians. Put them on one scale and put the lives that were lost in the last war of nationalism and I say the balance will be in the side of the latter. Islam means peace and nationalism means war. God made Islam to link all mankind in one family, and one community. This is my communalism. All mankind is divided into nations each being enemy of others. This is your nationalism, which leads to war. I want Hindus, Christians, Jews, and stone-worshippers—all to come and unite with me in one life and joint brotherhood, to come and join in embrace without coercion, compulsion, force and subterfuge and without such false propaganda which is taking place to-day in favour of the Nehru Report. You have the Union Jack over in one link of servitude and bondage with England and yet your ideal of nationalism is to divide mankind into enemies but my ideal of mankind is to unite man with man without sword or force. My communalism is to bring all into the fold of Islam by loving persuasion and service. I ask, when you boast of your nationalism and condemn communalism, to show me a country in the world like your India—your nationalist India."

"I want to ask, was the British Empire acquired lawfully? Was the State of Mahmudabad acquired lawfully or was it not acquired by violence? The Nizam State was acquired with sword. The robbers acquire their booty with sword and that is how the British Empire was acquired. How was your Tea industry, Cotton industry, Jute industry acquired?—lawfully? Everything was acquired lawfully? The Kingdom of Deccan to which so many of our Mahasabha friends are opposed—how was it acquired? You make compromises in your constitution every day with false doctrines, immoral conceptions and wrong ideas but you make no compromise with our communalists—with separate electorate and reserve seats. Twenty-five per cent. is our proportion of population and yet you will not give us 33 per cent. in the Assembly. You are a Jew, a bania. But to the English you give the status of your dominion. Mr. B. C. Pal knows the way to Dominion Status but does not know the way to Yarveda Jail.

In conclusion Mr. Ali said:—"I will declare before you that the Subjects Committee here passed last night the very first resolution that the goal of Indian Mussalmans is complete independence for India. This is nothing but a doctrine of the Quoran. The Quoran says that there is no Government but the Government of God. Therefore the Mussalmans of India, when they make complete independence their goal, say only what the Quoran had asked them to do 1310 years ago." The Conference was then adjourned.

## SECOND DAY—26TH DECEMBER 1928.

On this day, at the outset, Mr. Mohamed Ali expressed his sincere regret for declaring the previous day that there was fight in the Subjects Committee of the Congress and that some people were hurt. He had come to know from personal enquiry that there was no meeting of the Subjects Committee on that day and that the news was absolutely false.

The President then moved a resolution expressing the condolence of the Khilafat Conference at the death of Hakim Ajmal Khan.

## Pan-Islamism.

Mr. Azad Sobhani moved:—"This Conference declares once more that complete independence is our goal." He said that the resolution he had moved was only in accordance with the doctrine of their holy Koran. He would ask them not to finish their duty by passing the resolution, but to keep it before their mind's eyes as the watchword of their religion. Referring to the Nehru Report he said that the Nehru Report had practically no objective before it. It pleaded for Dominion Status which was nothing but another name of bondage and services. The Nehru Report was unsatisfactory not only to the Mussalmans, but also to the whole of India. To live like a slave was not proper and consistent with the religion of the Mussalmans. The reason of the degenerated condition of the Mussalmans was that they had ceased to abide by the injunctions of their religion. The first duty of the Mussalman was to break away the chain of servitude and to gain the lofty position which was their due share in the world.

Proceeding Mr. Sobhani said that to him it was a folly for the Mussalmans to follow

any worldly society or organisation like the Congress which was governed by human laws and regulations. The doctrine of nationalism as at present going on in India should not be followed by the Mussalmans. The Prophet had made the whole world for them and it had been ordained that they should love the whole world and rule over it. Their angle of vision should not be confined to India, Persia, Arabia or to any particular country. He believed that the Muslim Kings of India had lost their empire because they confined their angle of vision to India only.

Mr. Zafar Ali Khan said that the Nehru Report was for admitting and accepting slavery. The resolution was passed unanimously amidst acclamation.

### THIRD DAY—27TH DECEMBER 1928.

#### Federated India.

A Federation of Free and United States of India should be the future constitution of the country was the only resolution passed by the Conference on this day. Maulana Hasrat Mohani of Cawnpore moved :

"In the opinion of this Conference the future constitution of India should be so framed as to provide for a Federation of the Free and United States of India. This constitution should consist of :—(1) Fully autonomous provinces in India, (2) Large Indian states and groups of smaller Indian states when they join the Federation.

"Every constituent member of the Federation should possess plenary powers within its jurisdiction and should have its legislatures and Governor elected by the people of every constituent member of the Federation.

"The Central Federal Parliament should consist of representatives elected by the constituent members of the Federation and should have jurisdiction only over such subjects as concern the whole of India and are entrusted to it by the constituent members of the Federation which alone should be vested with residuary powers.

"Mussalmans of India will not accept any constitution which would not be framed on the principles stated above."

In moving the resolution Maulana Hasrat Mohani said that it was time for the Mussalmans to produce a new constitution for India. He was the first man to raise his voice against the Nehru Report and was glad to find that gradually he had been gaining more adherents to it. He thought the Nehru Report to be wrong from start to finish. The days of dynastic or constitutional monarchy had gone and the Republican Government had been liked by all. The Constitutional Government as embodied in the Nehru Report was very injurious to the Mussalmans. Moreover the report as it was, could not be accepted by the Native States of India as the Central Government to be established by the constitution of the Report would have the same power over the Indian states as the present Government of India. The real idea of the report, continued the speaker, was to give a soft moral support to the Mussalmans in some of the provinces seemingly and the residuary power had been left in the hands of the Central Government. So long the Congress insisted on full provincial autonomy but when the Central Government was going to be placed in the hands of the Hindus that idea had been discarded and the residuary power had been left in the Government. The idea originated from Mahatma Gandhi who had discouraged the propagation of the idea of independence and wanted Dominion Status. The report as had been truly said by one of his friends meant domination by the Hindus under the protection of the British bayonets. Dominion Status was called a half-way house to the path of independence. But that half-way house should be so considered by their conscience also. Complete independence was their ideal and to achieve that they must take up intensive work and not indulge in words.

Mr. Shafi Daudi supported the resolution. He wished that soon those who had been sponsors of Dominion Status would change their mind and make independence their national watchword. However, in the meantime, the Mussalmans should keep up the spirit of independence. The resolution was supported by many other speakers and was unanimously carried.

Mr. Mahomed Ali, President of the Conference, explained the objects of the resolution and in course of his explanation he strongly criticised the Nehru Report and its supporters. He said that what was happening now for the first time in the history of India was that a constitution was being framed which would give the rule of the country to the majority. He felt certain the no Hindu friend of him would deny that neither the Kurus nor the Pandus had a majority rule in India. Ajodhay was not ruled during Ramchandraj's time or during the time of his father by majority nor had Chandragupta, Vikramajit, Asoka or Prithviraj had ruled the country with majority. Neither Mohamed Bin Kassim nor Sahabuddin Gheri had a rule of majority nor did the Khiliji dynasty nor the Lodi dynasty, the

Togbluke, the Moghuls, nor even Akbar who was a friend of the Hindus nor did Aurangzeb ruled the country by majority. Neither Lord Clive nor Lord Dalhousie nor Wellesley nor Lord Canning nor Lord Reading nor to-day Lord Irwin had been ruling the country by majority. It was for the first time under Pandit Motilal that they were getting a form of Government ruled by the majority. Everybody said that communalism was very rampant in India and it was very important to ascertain as to what community was in the majority. It was clear that the Hindus were in majority in the land. Since the Hindu community was in the majority in the country and since the majority was going to rule the country could it be said that the Mussalmans were communalists? Or was it not true that the Hindu community having a clear majority wanted to rule the country themselves? Should the Hindus be not called communalist? The poor man was called mad because he tried to safeguard his interests and yet the rich people trying to guard their own interest were big and broad-minded.

Referring to the question of granting Reforms to the Frontier Province he said that the argument for not granting Frontier Reforms was very curious. It was said that in case reforms was given there India might be attacked by the foreigners. The right of franchise had been refused to the Pathans of Frontier for fear of foreign invasion and yet the fact remained that those Pathans had never accepted domination by any foreign rule and they had been managing their own affairs. The Pathans who were self-sufficient were said to be ignorant of democracy and Dr. Moonje and Sir Sivaswamy Iyer the two Brahmins who were the arch-monopolists of history were to teach them democracy. Speaking about the separation of Sindh Mr. Mahomed Ali said that Sindh was far away from Bombay, neither the flora nor fauna nor the language were in common between Sindh and Bombay, and yet they would ask Sindh to be amalgamated with Bombay and not with the Punjab. The reason was that Sindh was conquered in 1842 and the Punjab was conquered in 1849.

In conclusion Mr. Mahomed Ali referred to his being heckled in the meeting of the All-Parties Convention on the first day of its sittings and said that he had not said any thing on communalism there and yet he had been heckled at every step of his speech. He only spoke of defeatism. He only wanted to save Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta from cowardice and did not call Mr. Sen Gupta a coward. Even he though explained it to the President he was asked to say on oath that he had not said so which he refused to do. He challenged all those people and the newspapers which had been hurling showers of abuse against him to come forward and prove their case. He was sure that there was no reason in their arguments. The Conference then continued for some time and was then adjourned.

## Proceedings of the Central Khilafat Committee.

On the eve of the meeting of the Central Khilafat Committee in Calcutta a serious situation arose in the Khilafatists' camp over the acceptance of the Nehru Report and cognate matters. Trouble was purely personal in as much as the Ali Brothers wanted to have a solid support against the Nehru Report, while the Punjab Khilafat Committee and the Bengal Khilafat Committee excluding the Calcutta City Khilafat Committee were solidly for the Report.

Messrs. Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali who had great influence over the Calcutta City Khilafat Committee held a meeting on the 22nd December at which about 200 persons were present and elected thereat 30 delegates from Bengal to the Central Khilafat Committee. It would be recalled that the Provincial Khilafat Committee of Bengal had already held its meeting on the previous night, the 21st December, but some rowdies had broken into their meeting (See p. 407). The Bengal Provincial Khilafat Committee declared that they had held their election on the 21st, and that the election at the meeting on the 22nd was invalid.

Maulana Shafi Daudi who was the President of the Central Khilafat Committee, however, gave the Press to understand that he had ruled the Ali Brothers' election to be in order and that Friday's election was invalid.

The Central Committee continued till the next three days amidst uproarious scenes and could not come to any final decision. Already rival

Khilafat Committees had come into the field, and the dispute as to who should constitute the Central Khilafat Committee caused a split. The meeting had to be adjourned to enable the disputes regarding the rival committees to be settled. The Ali Brothers and Moulvi Shafi Daudi were backing the newly constituted Calcutta Khilafat Committee.

On the 26th December a representative meeting of the Khilafat leaders was held where it was resolved that about 45 prominent members of the Central Khilafat Committee who walked out of the meeting on the 24th would disassociate themselves from the Executive of the Central Khilafat Committee but would continue to be its members. A Sub-Committee was also formed consisting of Dr. M. Alam, T. K. Sherwani and Moulvi Majibur Rahaman to issue a statement explaining the circumstances that led to the present decision. The Sub-Committee would also draft a resolution agreeing with the general principles of the Nehru Committee's Report and suggest names of 50 members to represent the Central Khilafat Committee in the All-Parties Convention. The following is the text of the statement signed by Dr. Ansari and 44 others :—

### The Seceders' Statement.

We, the signatories of this statement and members of the Central Khilafat Committee, consider it our painful duty to make our position clear to the public with reference to our attitude in disassociating ourselves from those who hold executive offices in the Central Khilafat Committee to-day and with whom many of us have worked for all these years in laying the foundation of the O. K. C. and building up its edifice. It is after full deliberation that we have decided to record the following facts *inter alia* which have determined our present attitude.

(1) Let it be mentioned, first of all, that at the meeting of the O. K. C. held on the 24th instant we and our supporters formed a majority out of about 70 members of the O. K. C. then present. This fact was itself so obvious to the president that from the very beginning he resorted to the method of deciding controversial matters by means of wrong rulings instead of the usual course of taking votes by which our decisions would have been the decisions of the O. K. C.

(2) We have been making genuine efforts, for sometime, to come to a reasonable understanding on the Nehru Committee Report and several informal meetings were organised during the last few days between the two sections of the O. K. C. with the only result that all our efforts were frustrated by the method of obstruction and procrastination adopted by the representatives of the other party.

(3) The President of the O. K. C., on receiving the information that the Bengal Khilafat Committee, known to be in favour of the Nehru Committee Report, was conducting its election, went to the place of election and tried to stop it. When the President and Secretary of the O. K. C. who were there with about one hundred rowdies taken intentionally for the purpose, did not succeed in stopping election they tried to disturb the meeting. The Bengal Khilafat Committee however succeeded in electing thirty members for the O. K. C. Thereupon, the registers of the Bengal Provincial Khilafat Committee were forcibly taken into possession. The next day these gentlemen without any authority held an election for the said province from amongst the members enrolled in Calcutta only. This election was neither made in the presence of the members from district committees nor were names called from them. Besides the Bengal elections, the other disputed elections were from Bihar and N.-W. F. These disputed elections were formally brought to the notice of the president of the O. K. C. at the very commencement of the meeting and it was demanded that the rival parties of every disputed election should be treated on equal footing in being allowed or disallowed to exercise their right of vote. The president however by his wrong ruling given under the influence of partisan spirit, allowed all those parties to vote which supported his side and excluded the rival parties from the meeting.

(4) At the meeting of the Working Committee of the O. K. C. to which the disputed elections were referred, the partisan spirit of the president further became painfully clear. The election which the president and his party had organised from the Bengal

Provincial Khilafat Committee was rightly invalidated by a majority in the Working Committee; but the president freely gave his casting vote disqualifying the election made by the Bengal Provincial Khilafat Committee which he had tried to stop in vain. The same objectionable method was adopted in disqualifying members duly elected for the N.-W. F. by the Punjab Khilafat Committee in strict accordance with the rules of the constitution and the established practice. Disfranchisement of an affiliated body is a drastic step which is not resorted to, much less by the casting vote. But the president did not hesitate in using this method.

(5) In the second sittings of the C. K. C., which was held late at night the president's attitude became aggressively partisan.

(6) Later, when the election of members of the Subjects Committee was being conducted an offensive remark of a most responsible member of the C. K. C. led to angry words, and altercations, explanations and counter-explanations and to a regular pandemonium. This had hardly subsided when at the sound of a whistle from a Khilafat Volunteer, a number of persons carrying lathis and knives rushed into the pandal, and were with great difficulty prevented from using their weapons. There was a man seen actually brandishing a large hunting-knife, who was controlled with difficulty. We have no doubt in our mind that these rowdies were kept ready outside the pandal and that they rushed in at a given signal. Under these circumstances, we had no other alternative but to retire from the meeting, and those few who remained there a little longer did not join it again.

(7) We are informed that after all of us had left the pandal the President carried on not only the elections of members of the Subjects Committee, but notwithstanding his assurances to the contrary given at the commencement of the meeting carried out the elections on behalf of the Bengal Provincial Khilafat Committee for the C. K. C. in our absence, and elected those very thirty members whose election was invalidated by the Working Committee. The Secretary of the C. K. C. and other executive officers were elected then and there, in our absence and against the previous announcement of the President. These proceedings altogether are *ultra vires*. Having been made to retire by display of physical force and violence and in view of the unconstitutional, arbitrary and high-handed action of the executive of the C. K. C., we found it impossible to exercise our right of free expression of opinion, and were left with no other alternative but to hold a meeting of our own which constituted the majority of the members present in the aforesaid meeting of the C. K. C., and thus to give expression to our considered views. At a meeting of the aforesaid members of the C. K. C., held under the presidency of of Hon'ble Shah Mahomed Zubair the following resolutions were passed:—

"That in pursuance of the policy of the C. K. C., followed heretofore and acted upon in Lucknow, this committee resolve:

"(a) That participation in the All-Parties Convention be continued as before; and plenipotentiaries be sent there on behalf of the C. K. C., (b) that whilst keeping of the goal of complete National Independence of India is the ideal, the constitution prepared by the Nehru Committee be accepted in general, and the recommendations on communal representation be accepted with certain modifications, (c) that the Punjab pact entered into at Lucknow by the Punjab delegates sent to the All-Parties Conference by the C. K. C. be adopted in the place of the demand for reservation of seats for a period of ten years, (d) that the demand in the case of Bengal be made on the lines of the Punjab pact, (e) that seats in the legislature be reserved for Muslim minorities on the principles adopted by the All-Parties Conference for as long a period as they desire, (f) that residuary powers should rest in the Provincial Legislature, (g) that amendments sent in by the Punjab Khilafatists in the All-Parties Convention, are hereby adopted by the C. K. C., (h) that delegates be elected with full plenary powers to represent the C. K. C. in the All-Parties Convention."

## Proceedings of the Bengal Khilafat Committee.

The following signed statement was issued to the press by some of the members who were present at the meeting of the Bengal Provincial Khilafat Committee held on Friday evening, the 21st December, in Calcutta:—

A meeting of the Bengal Provincial Khilafat Committee was to be held at 6-30 p. m., on Friday last at 52 Harrison Road, Calcutta, the office of the Reception Committee of the coming session of the All-India Muslim League with the main object of electing 30 members to the Central Khilafat Committee. When the meeting was about to commence Maulana Shankat Ali (Secretary, Central Khilafat Committee) arrived at the place with Maulana Shafi Daudi and some others, took his seat in the Reception Com-

mittee office room on the first floor of the house and began to look into the books of the Khilafat Committee. Maulana Shaukat Ali put various questions at random such as whether the members had paid their subscriptions, how they were elected etc., etc.

Maulvi Jalaluddin Hashemi then proposed the names of 30 persons for membership of the Central Khilafat Committee. The resolution was seconded by Maulvi Nazir Ahmed Chowdhury. Mr. Abdul Matin Chowdhury M. L. A., raised the question about the validity of the meeting. When a discussion was going on Moulana Mohammad Ali with others arrived at the gate of the house and demanded admittance into the meeting with a large crowd that had been waiting outside and shouting frequently. He was told that he might come as a visitor but the others with him could not be allowed to enter the house or to come to the meeting. He sent word that he would not come alone but with the crowd. Eventually he with several others such as Mr. H. S. Subhawardy were brought to the meeting. Moulana Mohammad Ali began to talk and take part in the proceedings. The Moulanas were repeatedly told that if the Provincial Committee was doing anything wrong or unconstitutional they had no power or business to interfere with the proceedings at the meeting and that they might consider the validity of the meeting or of the procedure followed at the meeting when the matter would come up for consideration before the Central Khilafat Committee. But they proved impervious to all logic and reasoning.

#### Crowd Rushes In.

At this stage the crowd at the gate and on the road rushed into the house by overpowering the volunteers stationed at the gate, who had been instructed to allow those only to enter who would show the invitation cards received by them. On the first floor they entered the reception committee office room and damaged the khatas and papers of the committee and severely assaulted the clerk of the committee.

Some of the volunteers were very roughly handled. The crowd then went to the second floor and as many of them rushed into the room in which the meeting was being held as could find accommodations there. The rest took their stand on the verandah. The discussion at the meeting was going up. The president of the meeting and the mover and the seconder of the resolution were heckled from a man of his education, culture and position. The president put the resolution to vote, declared it carried and dissolved the meeting.

Maulana Mohammad Ali would not, however, stop here. He said that there was no Provincial Khilafat Committee in Bengal and so there was no meeting of such a committee. He asked the crowd present there to form a provincial committee at once by paying 4 annas each and by becoming its members. Some one amongst the crowd took out a hundred rupee note from his pocket as 4 annas subscription for they would be members. Maulana Abdullah Baqui pointed out that a Provincial Khilafat Committee could not be formed in that way and that members were to be elected from the districts. At this Maulana Mohammad Ali said that one who said so was fit to be sent to a lunatic asylum.

#### "I'll Smash your Face."

When this controversy was going on a great uproar and confusion were created by the crowd. Maulvi Nazir Ahmed Chowdhury who was in charge of the Khilafat Committee records at this time was going to leave the place with the records of the Khilafat Committee including the members' list, etc., when he was roughly handled by some of the rowdies and even mercilessly belaboured by some. Addressing Syed Jalaluddin Hashemi Moulana Mohammad Ali said that he would smash his face. After some further exhibition of rowdism the crowd dispersed with the Maulanas. One may ask as to why the Maulanas took up such an attitude and why they behaved in a manner so unbecoming. It is not at all difficult to divine the reason. Maulanas Shaukat Ali and Mohammad Ali have found that the stand they have at present taken in co-operation with those who were once their political opponents has become untenable. The representatives of the Panjab Khilafat Committee in the central body will not chime in with the present reviews of the Maulanas. The representatives of some other Provincial Khilafat Committees on the Central Committee will not share their views. The Maulanas were therefore making frantic efforts to secure the election of such members from Bengal as would support them. But their object has been altogether frustrated. One may therefore easily imagine when they behaved in a manner they did.

# Muslim All-Parties Conference.

OPENING DAY—31ST DECEMBER 1928.

The Muslim All-Parties Conference opened its session at Delhi on the 31st December 1928 in its pandal which was fully occupied by delegates and visitors. The pandal, which was erected on a maidān, with the famous Jumma Musjid in front and King Shah Jahan's fort on the back, presented a historic setting.

Attendance including visitors was about 3,000 and prominent among those present were Sir A. K. Ghaznavi, Mr. Mahmud Suhrawardy, Sir Zulfikar Ali Khan, Sir Mahomed Shafi, Sir Mahomed Iqbal, Malik Feroze Khan Noon, Nawab Mahomed Yusuf, Mr. Mahomed Ismail, Mr. Shafi Daudi, Syed Raza Ali, Sardar Sultan Ahmed of Gwalior, Dr. Ziauddin, Maulana Hasrat Mohani, Maulvi Muhammad Yakub, Chaudhri Zafarullah, and Moulana Mohammed Ali.

It was learnt that the majority of Muslim members of the Assembly, the Council of State and the Punjab and U. P. Council were present, while a number of Muslim members from the provinces of C. P., Bengal, Bombay and Assam were also present.

The proceedings commenced with the Imam of the Jumma Musjid reciting stanzas from the Koran, all standing. Various parties were just before the commencement of the session engaged in distributing their literatures. One of them was distributing Sir Abdul Rahim's address to the Bengal Muslim All-Parties' Conference.

## Objects of the Conference.

Hakim Jamil Khan's welcome address as Chairman of the Reception Committee was read, after which Mr. Fazal Rahimtullah, M. L. A. General Secretary of the Conference, made a comprehensive statement on behalf of the Conference. Answering the criticisms of the All-India Muslim League, Calcutta questioning the representative character of the Conference, he said :—

On behalf of the conveners of the conference I desire to welcome you, members of the Central and Provincial Legislature, accredited representatives of the important political organisations and elected delegates of the various provinces in India, and to express my deep gratitude for responding to our invitation. In view of the criticisms that have been levelled against the holding of the Conference, the conveners consider it desirable to explain briefly the reasons which led them to summon this representative conference. It will be recollected that towards the end of last year, soon after the appointment of the Statutory Commission under the Government of India Act had been announced, serious difference of opinion arose amongst the leading men of our community as to the attitude to be adopted by us towards the Commission. The controversy assumed serious proportions, and threatened to destroy Muslim solidarity. It actually culminated in the disruption and disintegration of an important political organisation. I meant the All-India Muslim League, which resulted in the formation of two distinct bodies. They both claimed to speak on behalf of the Muslims of India and passed conflicting resolutions both as regards the Commission and the Muslim political requirements.

It was thus clear that neither of the two was in a position to deliver the goods on behalf of the Muslim community, and their verdicts only amounted to expression of views of different schools of political thought in the Muslim community. The Congress convened the All-Parties' Conference with a view to frame a constitution for India, perhaps to meet the challenge of Lord Birkenhead. This Conference was first held at Delhi and the Calcutta League and the Central Khilafat Committee were represented at it. The League meeting held in Calcutta in 1927 accepted the resolution passed by the Madras Congress in that year with certain modifications.

An effort was made at the All-Parties' Conference held in Bombay to arrive at some useful solution. A committee was appointed under the chairmanship of Pandit Motilal Nehru. The Committee drew up a constitution for India and placed it before a conference held at Lucknow. The only Muslim organisation which was officially represented at the Lucknow Conference was the Central Khilafat Committee, and that body too did not approve of the recommendations of the Nehru Committee on the communal question.

The endorsement of the Nehru Report by the Conference at Lucknow created a feeling

of apprehension in the minds of Muslims as they felt that their rights were jeopardised, and that unless they did something, their claims would be lost by default. The Muslim members of the Central Legislature met in Simla in September last, and realising the situation convened an informal conference of all members of the Central Legislature as to what steps should be taken in order to place their views before the Convention which was to be held in December. It was resolved that in order to ascertain the real Muslim opinion on the important constitutional problem, a conference be convened of people belonging to all shades of Muslim opinion. This step was decided upon because of the unfortunate division in the All-India Muslim League.

The conveners of the conference decided to invite about 600 representatives belonging to all schools of thought, the composition of conference to be as follows:—(1) All non-official Muslim members of all Provincial Councils and the Central Legislature, (2) 20 Muslim representatives of each of the following organisations: The All-India Muslim League, Calcutta, the All-India Muslim League, Lahore, the All-India Khilafat Conference, the All-India Jamiatul Ulama Conference, and (3) 20 Muslim representatives from each province in India. In addition to these, other leading Muslims, such as. Dr. Anisari, Sir Ali Imam, Mr. Hasan Imam, Mr. Yakub Hasan and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad have also been invited. I am glad to inform you that all those whom we invited have kindly responded to our invitation except the Jinnah League, who not only refused our invitation but has questioned its representative character (shame, shame). I leave it for you to judge their claim in the light of their recent discussion at Calcutta.

The conveners of the conference deliberately decided not to frame definite proposals with regard to the Nehru Report to be placed before the conference for consideration, As you are aware, widely different views are held by important sections of the Muslim community in regard to this report. The conveners did not desire to take any partisan view by committing themselves to any definite line of action. Their earnest desire is that All-Muslim representatives should meet to examine the problem from all its aspects, and by a free and frank exchange of views, declare in clear terms the opinions held by the Muslim community as regards the future constitution of this country. 38 out of a total of 49 members of the Central Legislature joined in convening this conference, and decided to invite His Highness the Aga Khan to grace it as its President. (Applause). The conveners cannot but be deeply grateful to His Highness for having accepted their invitation, and having agreed to give his experienced guidance to the community.

The Nehru Report has received wide publicity, and many political organizations have discussed it at many conferences, which have been and are being held at Calcutta with the result, well-known to you through the elaborate reports in the press. The idea of holding this conference has appealed to an overwhelming body of Muslims in India (Hear, hear). But it has not escaped criticism. It is difficult to understand why so much opposition has been raised against the holding of this conference which has been based on an unassailable principle as I have already stated. The conveners are 38 members of the Central Legislature and their representative character is unquestioned (applause). All the Muslim members of the Provincial Legislative Councils in India have been invited as a matter of right, and many of them have responded by their presence at this gathering. Other representative Muslims have also been invited, and many of them are here. I claim that this is a thoroughly representative gathering which can legitimately claim to speak authoritatively for the Muslims of India (cheers). Surely, it is far more representative than an individual association having a small number of members on its roll (Hear, hear).

I am unable to understand why there should be any opposition to a conference of Muslims. It is claimed that the Nehru report has been prepared to meet the challenge of Lord Birkenhead, the then Secretary of State for India. The challenge was for an agreed constitution (Hear, hear). In view of the recent happenings at Calcutta, I should like to ask whether the Nehru Constitution can by any stretch of imagination be called an agreed constitution (Hear, hear). If Lord Birkenhead's challenge is to be effectively met, the framers of the Nehru Constitution ought to welcome criticism from all important sections of the Indian population and receive it in the right spirit. The Muslim community in India is not an unimportant part of the population, and if representative Muslims call such a conference as this, it will result in knowing the real mind of Muslims so that it may contribute towards securing what is required, viz, an agreed constitution.

Let me assure my Hindu friends that the Muslims are not a whit less keen for self-government for their common motherland than the former (applause). The Muslims only desire and rightly desire, that in the future Government of India their legitimate interests shall be adequately and unequivocally safeguarded (Hear, hear). That is the



object of holding this conference and it is for you, gentlemen, to come to mature decisions as regards the all-absorbing question of the political future of our motherland (cheers).

Moulvi Mahomed YAKUB, Deputy President of the Assembly, and President of the last year's All-India Muslim League, Calcutta, stated that the promoters of the conference had been called toadies and Government agents. He would like to know whether greater proof was needed of the genuinely representative character of the conference than that Mr. Shafi Dandi, for five years the trusted lieutenant of Pandit Matlal and one who had suffered so much during Non-co-operation had joined the conference. (Applause). He recalled that the deputation which waited on Lord Minto and brought about separate electorates was headed by the Aga Khan, and it was most fortunate that now that the question of separate electorate was being re-examined, they should have the services of the same gardener who first sowed the seed (Applause). There was no other person in India except H. H. the Aga Khan who could make all the parties unite over one platform. (Applause).

Sir Zulfikar Ali Khan, Mr. Mahmud Suhrawardy and Mr. Abdulla Haroon supported, and the Aga Khan was garlanded and took the chair amidst tumultuous applause, the whole audience rising to a man.

### The Aga Khan's Presidential Address.

The Aga Khan was cheered as he came up to deliver his presidential address. The following is the text :—

Gentlemen,—I thank you for the great honour you have done me in asking me to preside over your deliberations. Before proceeding with the business I am sure the Muslim community will join me unanimously in wishing His Majesty the King-Emperor complete restoration to health and strength. The deep anxiety which the world has shown for His Majesty's health, which had been undermined by overwork in the zealous discharge of his multifarious and onerous duties, shows that they all appreciate his solicitude for the welfare of humanity at large. It has been an anxious time not only for His Majesty's subjects but for the whole world who have watched with keen anxiety one who has been regarded as a great pillar on which depends the progress of the world. Happily our anxiety is nearly, if not wholly over. The illness drew sympathy for the Queen Empress, the Prince of Wales and the Royal family and it must have been some comfort to them that their trouble was shared not only by every individual in the Empire but by the people of other countries. May His Majesty live long to continue to shower the blessing of his beneficent rule on his subjects.

### Muslims and the Body Politic.

Now, I will at once come to the immediate business before us which is to consider the position of our co-religionists and their interests in the body politic of India. The views and opinions I express are based on long experience of public affairs as well as the study of the past and present history of other nations. The lessons of the Great War have further strengthened those conclusions which I have arrived at after mature consideration.

The great lesson of modern history, to my mind, is that only those nations succeed and only those policies lead to national greatness, which are based not on ideas or ideals, but on the general consensus of views and opinions of the people. I will give one or two examples in support of this argument. The policy of Imperial Germany was shaped by the leaders of that nation as a class. The pre-war policy of Russia, as men like Tolstoy, Witte and Rosen kept on explaining to the world, was not that of the Russian people, but inspired by the Pan-Slavists, Kat Kof and his disciples. The policies of England and France were indeed based on the desires of the English and the French people. Similar examples are to be found on every page of recent history. When in my manifesto last year I appealed to the Moslems of India to replace the old self-constituted political bodies that had served their day and purpose by an organisation of all Muslim members in touch with their electorates, I wished to place the guidance of our people in their own hands. The time has come when the leaders should keep their ears to the ground and ascertain the views and wishes of the masses. Gentlemen, make no mistake. The changes that must come over India profoundly affecting our future, will not come in a day. They will not come as in Russia

like a thief in the night. Had the result of the war been different we might have suddenly found ourselves in that position but the attitude of the overwhelming mass of the Indian public during the war showed to the world that they were not in favour of such a hurried solution. Whatever our wishes may be, this Conference is but the first of many more that will have to evolve a truly representative body to look after and further the desire of Moslems of India. The greatest service you can render to your people would be to organise all the Moslem members of each and every assembly into a body where exchange of views and ideas and communication of the same to the electors as well as the reception of the general desires of the masses, would remain the main purpose and object. In politically successful countries, from the Premier or the President to the humblest voter, it is but one succession of nerve lines of communication. If we had such a body I for one should sleep in peace, for I would know that many political mistakes would be made by them and not by anybody else for them. From now onwards we must ever remember even in this Conference, not what are our own political preferences but what are the aspirations of the rising Moslem generation as represented by the masses.

Then there are certain obvious truisms which are necessary forms of thought for political activity just as certain mental truisms are the basis of natural science and intellectual life. In this connection I may give you several examples of those obvious facts that may be forgotten at times. Here is one. It is impossible for Moslems to live happily and peacefully in India if friction and suspicion are to prevail between them and the Hindus. Another vivid instance. India as a whole cannot be prosperous or self-governing country if such a large and important section of the community as the Moslems remain in doubt as to whether their cultural entity is safe or not. Here is a third and most important one. As long as we are dependent for protection against external aggression and internal security and for peace upon Great Britain and the British garrison occupies the land and the air and naval forces survey us from above and watch the coasts, Great Britain will naturally claim a predominant share and voice in the governance of India. It is essential that these and similar other truisms should not be lost sight of. The Moslem masses are, I am sure, sufficient realists to know and appreciate them. Gentlemen, you come from them, you are in touch with them, you know their views.

Another point to be kept before us is that our desires must not be mere ideas and ideals. You are part of them. It is your duty to interpret as far as you can their wishes, their aspirations and their ideals, till such time as our political organisation is sufficiently advanced to let the people carry out their own wishes. Another point to be kept in view is that our wishes or ideals are not necessarily realities.

You must avoid forcing your own preferences when they clash with what we believe to be the real wishes of the mass of the people. The policy to be pursued during the immediate years, I would once more emphasise, must not be based on our personal views and predilections, but on what you know to be the general desire of the people to whom you belong. What are the desires of the Indian Moslems? I can safely say that the overwhelming majority of Moslems are determined to maintain their cultural unity and remain culturally interrelated with the Moslems of the world. How that can best be accomplished it is for you to think out.

But that does not mean that the general welfare of the whole Commonwealth is to be ignored by us. It does not mean that the Moslem representatives' activities are to be confined to their own sectional interest. That would be wrong. The Moslem members should consider it their duty to look after the interests of India as a whole or of a province as a whole and advocate the promotion of general interests at every opportunity. I will illustrate what I mean by giving a concrete example. Now, take the question of education: primary, secondary and higher.

For more than a generation I have urged that a national educational policy for India is impossible unless financed by large educational grants raised by the States as loans and not from current revenue. Such loans should be as much a legitimate object as any public work as they will through improvement

in intelligence add to the economic welfare of the country. In regard to Muslim education, especially, one striking fact is that there exists a sort of break of gauge between primary and higher education in the universities and technological and other institutions. It is incumbent on us all to find a solution of this most important question. Our secondary educational institutions specially need further support from the State.

Another great difficulty which has been ineffectually tackled in the past is the question of language as medium for instruction. We must bear in mind that the acquisition of knowledge is quite a different thing from the medium of acquiring it. Our linguistic traditions are mainly based on Persian and Urdu. Urdu is one of the most important and widespread languages in the world. It serves as a medium of communication between Moslems of different parts of India as between Moslems and other communities of a district. The foundation of the Osmania University which owes its existence to the magnificent generosity of His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad, is bound to give a great impetus to the educational activities of our people. It is adapted to higher culture. But both Urdu and Persian scripts present serious difficulties in the primary stage of education and it is a matter for deliberation how we can improve and simplify or change the script.

Now, whether in education or in politics, I would beg of you to consider the realities and not to throw away the substance for the shadow. Whether in education or in politics build on a solid foundation. Do not be carried away by catch words; nor hanker after ideals that may not be within your grasp but concentrate your minds on what is practicable and useful under pressing economic and political needs of the country and strive after actualities to promote the higher happiness of mankind by greater and greater development of the productive resources of India.

In recent times no question seems to have aroused so much controversy as the question of separate electorates for the protection of the rights of minorities.

The merits and demerits of separate or so-called communal electorates have been discussed so often that it is unnecessary to re-examine them here in detail. In regard to the implications of the term "communal" I may remark in passing that the Muslims of India are not a community but in a special sense a nation composed of many communities and population outnumbering in the aggregate the total even of the pre-war German Empire.

The vital and dominant consideration which underlies this question is the real representation of Moslems in all legislatures and self-governing bodies. How that can be secured is a problem for the Moslem population of this country to consider and solve without any prejudices.

Gentlemen, I have specially at your request come to this conference and felt it more than ever my duty to draw your attention to the urgent problems that can be dealt with rather than to discuss doubtful question of an uncertain future. If through your elected representatives you can further the practical solution of these problems a great step forward will have been taken.

I cannot allow my speech to close without making a passing reference to a subject of constant friction between the two sister communities and making a fervent appeal with all the earnestness that I command, to remove that friction as far as possible so that Muslims may live in amity with their Hindu brethren. While referring to the cause of friction I take this opportunity of expressing profound admiration and gratitude of Indians to His Excellency the Viceroy for his earnest endeavour to bring about harmonious relations between the Hindus and Mahomedans.

Cow-killing has unfortunately been a perpetual source of bitter feeling between Muslims and Hindus. It is incumbent on us all to find a remedy. It may help us to do this if we trace the origin of sacrificial rites. We are all agreed that we celebrate the historical sacrifice by Ibrahim. But it must be remembered that Ibrahim, one of our great Prophets, did not sacrifice a cow, nor is the sacrifice of a bovine especially enjoined in our religious books. On the contrary, the camel or the sheep is more frequently mentioned in connection with sacrificial rites. How many of our Hajis have sacrificed cows in Arabia,

the home of Islam, and, if they have not done so, have they disregarded any injunction of their religion? All of you, I am sure will give an emphatically negative answer to this query. Then why do we view the question from a different angle in India?

The Emperor Baber who, as Mr. Edwards has pointed out, was the greatest monarch of his age, enjoined his son Humayun to respect the religious sentiments and even the prejudices of the Hindus and he specifically mentioned the cow as an animal venerated in India. The Ameer Habibullah Khan, who was a good Muslim, discountenanced the sacrifice of cows. If other Muslim leaders share their views they will certainly not be acting against any Islamic injunction.

The Kashmiri Muslim adheres tenaciously to the injunctions of Islam and he knows that killing is not one of the tenets of our religion. You no doubt know our religious dictum that "the flesh and blood of animals do not reach God." This is a humanitarian view entirely in accord with our conception of the Deity and His creation.

I am open to be enlightened on this point by our Ulemas, but I am certain that not one of them will countenance the parade of sacrificial rites in public places. There are many other communities who eat beef but they do not hurt the susceptibilities of their neighbours by parading the sacred and adored animals for slaughter.

In the light of these facts, which I have mentioned, it is a matter for your serious consideration whether we should re-examine our views on this particular form of sacrifice and test its true significance. If, by doing so, we can readjust our relations with our Hindu friends, we shall indirectly render a service of incalculable value and importance to the cause of peace and prosperity and even perhaps satisfactory political readjustment.

The Presidential Address being over the Conference adjourned.

## SECOND DAY—1ST JANUARY 1929.

The Muslim All-Parties Conference re-assembled on this day at 5 in the evening, being delayed by an hour owing to prolonged discussions in the Subjects Committee. As the entire body of delegates constituted the Committee, the decisions reached by them were only to be formally moved publicly and passed.

As the Conference opened its doors, news spread that after a considerable tug of war agreement had been reached between the two schools of thought represented by Sir Mahomed Shafi and the Ali Brothers by adjustment in the form of a resolution the substance of which was acceptable to both. This unanimity was publicly celebrated by the entire body of delegates sitting for a group photograph of what they considered would go down as a historic meeting.

### Sir M. Shafi's Speech,

Sir Mahomed SHAFI then rose to move the main resolution laying down their demand for separate electorates and representation in all statutory bodies, Cabinets and the services; but making no mention either of Independence or Dominion Status nor of the Simon Commission nor the Nehru Report, but declaring that whosoever devised a constitution must accept the Muslim demand embodied in the resolution.

Sir Mahomed Shafi said that Mr. Fazal Rahimtoolah and Mr. Shafi Daudi had told them of the origin of this conference. The speaker was in London at the time of its conception by 35 Muslim members of the Central Legislature, and did not come to know of it till on his return journey a friend in Port Said gave him a file of Indian newspapers from which he learnt of the proposal. He rejoiced at the idea and was thankful that it should have occurred to the conveners at a grave crisis when the Muslim community was faced with a life and death question. He further informed the audience that although the All-India Muslim League, Lahore, had previously decided to hold its annual session and Cawnpore had invited them, its Council felt that in view of the All-Parties Muslim Conference, they should postpone their session and take part in it.

Mr. Jinnah had no other reply to the speaker's numerous communications except that he should proceed to Calcutta. "Did Mr. Jinnah wish us to face

the same conditions which befell him and his friends in Calcutta? (Hear, hear.) This is the first time that any Muslim association has been so badly treated, and I consider this as an insult not only to that League but for all Muslims. (Shame, shame.) There were only 49 delegates at the Calcutta League. Of them only five or six were representative men and of the rest I have heard their names for the first time though as a member of the Government for five and half years I had an opportunity of extensive travel all over the country. You will further observe that the All-Parties Convention asked that League to send 50 delegates but as they were only 49 in all they sent 23 (laughter and cheers) and no one except Mr. Jinnah was allowed to speak in the Convention. They were shouted down by cries of 'shame, shame' and were given no quarter. (Shame, shame.) And every one of their requests was rejected by the Hindus. We would also have been similarly treated if we had joined them. It is far better to join here and express our feelings and demand from the British Parliament that these rights must be granted to us, and that so long as these are not granted, we shall not accept any constitution".

Continuing, Sir M. Shafi said that here was a conference on which every opinion was represented. There were the Ali Brothers. There was Maulvi Kafaitullah, President of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema. They had there Maulvi Shafi Daudi who was at one time a Non-co-operator.

Mr. Shafi Daudi: At one time.

Sir M. Shafi: Yes. You non-co-operated with us. At least you don't non-co-operate with us now. All of us have a true love for Islam although in the past our method of work differed.

Continuing Sir Mahomed Shafi said that over a hundred Muslim members of the Central and Provincial legislatures were present in the conference. Even a number of those who took part in the Jinnah League were present. (Hear, hear.) Thus, there was no school of thought which was not present. "I challenge any one to show that any similar representative gathering of any community in India has been ever held (cheers); and added: We have here as our president one who is a unique personality in the Muslim world. (Cheers) Any one who characterises the united voice of such a body of men as not representing the voice of Mussalmans would be wrong. Such views as we have formulated here will carry great weight. Indeed, if any one rejects them, the Mussalmans will not be responsible for the consequences that will follow such rejection.

The resolution which I am going to move has been very carefully considered after taking note of the resolutions passed by the provincial conferences. If you pass it with a united voice, it will carry with it the feelings of seven crores of Muslims and the demand will be irresistible.

Sir Mahomed Shafi then read the resolution. The following is the text:—

#### Text of Resolution on Separate Electorates.

"Whereas in view of India's vast extent and its ethnological, linguistic, administrative and geographical or territorial divisions, the only form of Government suitable to Indian conditions is a federal system with complete autonomy and residuary powers vested in the constituent States, the Central Government having control only over such matters of common interest as may be specially entrusted to it by the constitution;

"And whereas it is essential that no bill, resolution, motion or amendment regarding intercommunal matters be moved, discussed or passed by any legislature, central or provincial, if a three-fourths majority of the members of either Hindu or the Moslem community affected thereby in that legislature opposed the introduction, discussion or passing of such bill, resolution, motion or amendment:

"And whereas the right of the Moslems to elect their representatives on the various Indian legislatures through separate electorates is now the law of the land, and Moslems cannot be deprived of that right without their consent; and whereas in the conditions existing at present in India, and so long as those conditions continue to exist, representation in the various legislatures and other statutory self-governing bodies of Moslems through their own separate electorates, is essential in order to bring into existence a really representative democratic

Government; and whereas so long as Mussalmans are not satisfied that their rights and interests are adequately safeguarded in the constitution, they will in no way consent to the establishment of joint electorates whether with or without the conditions; and whereas for the purposes aforesaid, it is essential that Mussalmans should have their due share in the Central and Provincial cabinets; and whereas it is essential that representation of Mussalmans in various legislatures and other statutory self-governing bodies should be based on a plan whereby the Moslem majority in those provinces where Mussalmans constitute a majority of the population shall in no way be affected and in the province in which the Mussalmans constitute a minority they shall have a representation in no case less than that enjoyed by them under the existing law: and whereas the representative Muslim gatherings in all provinces in India have unanimously resolved that with a view to provide adequate safeguard for the protection of the Muslim interests in India as a whole, Mussalmans should have the right of  $33 \frac{1}{3}$  per cent. representation in the Central Legislature, this Conference entirely endorses that demand;

"And whereas on economic, linguistic geographical and administrative grounds the province of Sind has no affinity whatever with the rest of the Bombay Presidency and its conditional constitution into a separate province possessing its own separate legislative and administrative machinery on the same lines as in other provinces of India is essential in the interests of its people, the Hindi minority in Sind being given adequate and effective representation in excess of their proportion in the population as may be given to Mussalmans in the provinces in which they constitute a minority of population;

"And whereas the introduction of constitutional reforms in North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan along such lines as may be adopted in other provinces of India is essential, not only in the interests of those provinces, but also of the constitutional advance of India as a whole, the Hindu minorities in those provinces being given adequate and effective representation as is given to the Moslem community in provinces in which it constitutes a minority of population; and whereas it is essential in the interests of Indian administration that provision should be made in the constitution giving Mussalmans their adequate share along with other Indians in all the services of the State and of all statutory self-governing bodies having due regard to the requirements of efficiency; and whereas having regard to socio-political conditions obtaining in India, it is essential that the Indian constitution should embody adequate safeguards for the protection of Moslem culture and for the promotion of Moslem education, language, religion, personal law and Moslem charitable institutions and for their due share in the grants-in-aid; and whereas it is essential that the constitution should provide that no change in the Indian constitution shall after its inauguration be made by the Central Legislature except with the concurrence of all the states constituting the Indian Federation, this Conference emphatically declares that no constitution, by whomsoever proposed or devised, will be acceptable to Indian Mussalmans unless it conforms with the principles embodied in this resolution."

#### Mr. Sadique's Amendment.

Mr. Sadique from Amritsar, who at Calcutta supported the motion for the Muslim League's participation in the Delhi Conference opposed the resolution, mainly because it gave no latitude for further negotiations. His speech was punctuated with interruptions and cries of "sit down" and "explain your amendment." He frequently sought the protection of the chair, and was allowed to proceed only with difficulty. He suggested that at that late hour they should provide some provision to keep the door open for further negotiation. The resolution, as it was, would rank as onesided, communal and reactionary.

In conclusion, he told the audience that he was an equally vehement opponent of the Nehru Report.

Moulana Mahomed ALI, who followed, said that the Convention at Calcutta instead of fighting the Simon Commission had agreed to Dominion Status in order to reconcile the Liberals, but nothing had been done to reconcile Moslems. The Mussalmans were blamed for communalism. There was no country in the world where the treatment meted out to the untouchable was tolerated and with

this treatment of theirs to their own kith and kin, how was it possible for Mussalmans to trust them? The Nehru Report intended that although the universe may belong to God and the country to the British, it was the Mahasabha who should rule. Personally, he held they wanted liberty under which they could easily compose their differences. He advised the Mussalmans not to be afraid of the Hindu majority as in all their religious battles in the past one Moslem had overpowered three Kafirs. But till they got freedom, separate electorate was the only effective device to keep them alive.

In conclusion, the speaker said that Pandit Motilal Nehru by transferring residuary powers to the Central Government was aiming to destroy their sting and reduce them to the position of a fly on his table. But even they would have poison enough to contaminate the dinner with cholera germs.

Resolution Carried.

The resolution was further supported by Mufti Kifayatullah and others and was carried unanimously.

On the motion of Moulana Shaukat Ali the House adopted a resolution expressing thanks to the Aga Khan.

By another resolution they decided to organise the community by concentrating on primary education and encouraging arts and crafts among Mussalmans and also encouraging Islamic culture and starting newspapers. The Conference then dispersed.

## The Bengal Muslim All-Parties Conference.

The Bengal Muslim All-Parties Conference held its sitting at Haliday Park, Calcutta on Sunday the 23RD DECEMBER 1928 under the presidency of Sir Abdur Rahim. Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy was the Chairman of the Reception Committee. Delegates from different districts of Bengal attended the Conference as representatives of different Muslim organisations of the province.

### Chairman's Address.

Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy, Chairman, Reception Committee, in welcoming the delegates said that the Conference had been convened in order to ascertain the real views of the Muslims of Bengal on the political problems and to express them to the rest of Muslims in India. He hoped that the Conference would be a permanent body which would sit from time to time to consider the political problems which might confront their community.

Referring to the Nehru Report he said that a new constitution for India was being forged and naturally all of them would be affected by the changes that would be introduced. It could not be denied that the Nehru Report formed and was forming a very convenient basis for future discussion, even in the most authoritative Muslim assemblies. It had been admirably produced by some of the greatest leaders of India and it was unexceptionable in many of its recommendations. Although many of them felt that when dealing with the communal problems, it had dealt harshly with the Muslim community it would be wrong for them to impute any but the most honourable motives to the authors of the report. Nevertheless if they felt that injustice had been done to their community, it was their duty to assert their rights.

It was the earnest wish and endeavour of every politically-minded citizen that India should have Dominion Status. Dominion Status would go a far way towards establishing their position. The acquisition of this was in no way bound up with the communal problems. The constitution should be on a Federal basis, the provinces should have full autonomy. The Central Government must be strictly limited to its subjects and must not interfere with the administration of the provinces. Each province must be fully autonomous, even to the extent of there being no reservation for law and order without which any reform would be a farce and a sham and provincial responsibility meaningless.

## Sir Abdur Rahim's Address.

The President of the Conference, Sir Abdur Rahim, then delivered his address which was a long one. He said :—

The report of the Nehru Committee is an important public document and deserves our serious consideration. I have given my best attention to the Report and the conclusion that I have arrived at is that it would be a grave political blunder at this crisis to reject it wholesale. Its definition of the future constitution of India on the basis of responsible Government with the status of a self-governing dominion within the British Empire, is undoubtedly sound and in accordance with both Mahomedan and Hindu public opinion. This common meeting ground for all important political bodies is a great thing gained even if the Report embodies certain important constitutional proposals which in our opinion are not calculated to meet the obvious political and administrative requirements of the country and therefore require amendments in those respects.

I know my community too well throughout India to entertain the least doubt that they no less than the Hindu community are thoroughly dissatisfied with the present position and are eager and in earnest to secure a proper constitution and a worthy national status for India. India is, in fact, pining for an opportunity to express herself and who is there among her sons who would not like to help to secure that opportunity as early as possible? I am a firm believer in a democratic form of government notwithstanding some of its inherent shortcomings and in spite of all the special difficulties which it is bound to meet with in its working in this country.

I am equally sure on the other hand that neither the Mahomedan nor any other community of India will be satisfied with any inferior status for the country. No self-respecting Indian, in fact, whatever his creed or caste, can be contented with India's position as a mere Dependency or Possession of England.

The natural development of the Indian constitution must be on the federal lines. A central unitary form of government for the whole of India is almost inconceivable, it follows that the provinces must be autonomous and the jurisdiction of the Central Government and Legislature should be confined only to such subjects as concern the whole of India, such as the defence, All-India communications, relations with the Princes' states, inter-provincial relations, foreign affairs, currency, fiscal policy and customs.

It should be clearly laid down that the constitution cannot be repeated or altered in any way without it being agreed to by each of the Provincial Legislatures by at least a two-thirds majority and a similar majority in the Central Legislature.

I must express an earnest hope that the Convention and the Congress will reconsider the matter and definitely adopt a proper federal constitution with each province equally represented in the Central Legislature, clearly providing that the constitution as framed now cannot be repeated or modified in any of its provisions without a clear vote of every province. I may, however, say that under the circumstances I would see no objection to giving the Central Government or the Governor-General-in-Council adequate emergency powers to meet any case of widespread disorder and disturbance which the provinces with their limited resources are unable to cope with and in cases of serious maladministration. If the federal system be not agreed upon, it is difficult to see how the introduction of responsibility is possible in the Central Government. I should be inclined even to accept for the present an appropriate form of partial responsibility in the Central Legislature especially as some of the most important subjects which it has to administer, such as the relations with the Princes' States, Foreign affairs and the Army, will for some time perhaps be better administered by men who are not responsible in the ordinary way to the Legislature. On the subject of full responsible Government for the provinces there has hitherto been no difference of opinion among any responsible political bodies and I doubt if the All-Parties Conference wishes to depart from it. This shall, as I have said, be the very basis of the constitution. That to my mind, is the only feasible way of advance. It is strange that some persons while demanding Provincial Autonomy have agreed to Law and Order being reserved subjects. These gentlemen do not seem to be conscious that Law and Order are the essentials of a government and if that is reserved in the hands of permanent officials whether Europeans or Indians, the cause of responsible government is destroyed at the root. I am aware that the communal riots are pointed to as the justification for such a proposal, but it is forgotten that these riots have been under the administration of officials who are not responsible to the Legislature and from long before the introduction of the Reforms. In any case the emergency powers that will be vested in the Governor-General-in-Council should be sufficient to remedy any weakness that may be displayed by a local Government in such and similar cases.

I understand that it is some Muslim gentlemen who have endorsed the suggestion that Law and Order should not be transferred to ministers responsible to the Legislature.



I must say that I don't find it possible to sympathise with such a mentality and it is highly creditable to the Hindu community that no man belonging to that community occupying a position in public life of the province has supported such a reactionary proposal. So far as the Muslim community of Bengal is concerned, I venture to think that the attitude of the official administrators of Law and Order during the riots in Calcutta, Dacca, Barisal, Pabna, Palashipara and Khargpur has taught the community a lesson which it cannot easily forget, namely, that an official administration of Law and Order which is not responsible to the Legislature is wholly inadequate to meet the exigencies of communal or other similar stress. On the question of a Second Chamber my definite opinion is that there is no room for such an institution in the provinces, and certainly not in Bengal. It would be sure to create far more difficulties than even Dyarchy and it would be a body which would never command the confidence of the people.

Nothing has pleased me more in the Report of the Nehru Committee than sub-clauses V and XVII of clause IV in Chapter VII in which the right of the citizens of India for free elementary education is recognised and Parliament is enjoined to make suitable laws to secure a living wage for every worker, for the maintenance of health, protection of motherhood for and the welfare of children. But it is imperative that these and other fundamental rights of the citizens should be enforced by practical measures and that will never be possible unless the idea of making special provisions for powerful monopolists and privileged classes is abandoned and every care is taken to see that the great bulk of the population of Bengal are able to send true and faithful representatives to the Council.

I now come to the question of representation in the various legislatures.

Any arrangement which does not in fact help any large section of the population to contribute their best to national life or is likely to depress or discourage them or to produce or accentuate bitterness of feelings between any two large sections of the people should be discarded as unsound. I must frankly admit that I am not at all influenced by the mere use of the epithet, 'communal' or 'national' and I am fully aware how these words can be exploited to the serious detriment of the cause of the country. It is the feeling of mutual trust and good-will and the spirit of give and take that has to be fostered and we can never create that by ignoring the desires and sentiments, or even the prejudices and weaknesses of large sections of the people or by making pleasant assumptions contrary to unpleasant facts.

The Nehru Committee apparently felt and every fair-minded person must feel the same,—that a franchise founded on property qualification, if adopted in India where the economic standard is so low and the distribution of wealth is so uneven in different sections of the people would not secure a healthy development of democracy on a wide basis. Hence they have adopted adult franchise and I for one cordially recognise that by this proposal of theirs they have set up a great and inspiring ideal before the country. But as practical politicians we have to consider whether adult franchise is a practicable measure at this stage of the country's growth and if it be not, what then is the alternative. I believe all important Indian political leaders are agreed first of all that the franchise should be considerably lowered and that the number of candidates returned should be increased at least to double the present number.

But then this further question arises, should the physical boundaries of certain areas alone determine the formation of constituencies or the mentality, the needs and the moral tendencies of certain distinct groups among the people be also taken into consideration. The cry against separate communal electorates as a crime against the national idea is surely exaggerated. It is said that separate electorates tend to divide the people into distinct and hostile groups. The fact, however, is, as every one knows, that separate electorates and the demand for them are the effect of such division and not the cause.

I recognise the fact, however, that the Hindu political leaders and the organisations which they control, such as the Congress and the Hindu Mahasabha, are unanimous and united in offering separate electorates for the Mahomedans and for any other community such as the Europeans. It is equally indispensable that the Mahomedan community generally, as represented by its representatives in the various legislatures and other elective bodies, such as District Boards and Municipalities, all stand for separate electorates. In Provinces where the Mahomedan population is less than 33 p.c. such as the United Provinces and Behar they ask that their representation in the legislature should at least be raised to that proportion as a measure of safeguard for their just interests and they are willing to make similar concession to the Hindu minorities placed in similar circumstances. It is also of supreme importance to the Mahomedans of India as a whole that as repeatedly laid down by the All-India Muslim League the Muslim representation in the Central Legislature shall not be less than one-third.

At present the Electorates are formed on the basis that none but Mahomedans are

eligible to contest seats in the Mahomedan constituencies and no Mahomedans on the other hand are eligible to represent non-Mahomedan constituencies. I regard this an unjust interference with the discretion of voters and I see no reason why if a Mahomedan constituency chooses to return a Hindu or a European it should not be open to it to do so and 'vice-versa.' I know that in actual practice very few constituencies composed of Hindus and Mahomedans will return candidates of a different community and that fact at once shows that Mahomedans and Hindus alike would like to be represented by men of their respective communities. But even if in a few isolated cases to begin with, candidates belonging to one community successfully contest seats in constituencies of another community then that would go a longer way to pave the way to general Electorates than reservation of seats for candidates of one community in joint Electorates. This is a modification of the present system which I should be inclined to recommend. That is to say, for instance, I suggest that separate Mahomedan and Hindu constituencies be formed in proportion to their respective populations in the Punjab and in Bengal and 39 per cent of the constituencies for the United Provinces and Behar and Orissa be formed of Mahomedans and a similar proportion of Hindu constituencies in Sindh and the N. W. F. Province.

The Mahomedans of Bengal have a special grievance with regard to the number of seats now allotted to them. They form about 50 per cent of the population and the Southborough Committee in spite of the protests of the Government of India gave them 40 per cent of the elected seats, proceeding on the basis of the Lucknow Pact in which as the Mahomedans all over India now admit, the Mussalmans of Bengal had received very unfair treatment. We insist that this injustice be remembered and that either 55 per cent of the seats be reserved for them through separate electorates or that at least Mahomedan constituencies be formed in that proportion.

The problem of the N. W. F. Province concerns the whole of India for unless the people of that province on whose contentment and loyalty depends the security of the country are welded into the Indian nationality a self-governing India will meet with the greatest difficulties. The Government of that Province should be modelled on the same lines as that of the rest of India. We must be thankful to the Nehru Committee for recognising this fact.

Adequate educational qualifications must be the test for admission into the public services, but it is necessary that in the recruitment of the public services due regard be paid not solely to academic qualifications but also to the need for securing the widest possible confidence in the administration by averting a communal or class monopoly. The only proper arrangement is that the Central Government should be responsible for the recruitment, the terms and conditions, discipline and control of the Civil Service required for administering the subjects in its charge. The provinces should make their own laws and regulations with respect to their own Civil Services.

Gentlemen, I have been able to touch only on some of the important general problems with which we are faced. But it is necessary that you should appoint a Committee to consider the entire position more fully and then try to come to an understanding with the political bodies which are having their meetings in Calcutta.

## The Resolutions.

The following resolutions were passed in the Conference :—

- (1) That the members of the Bengal Muslim All-Parties Conference express their most respectful and loyal sympathy with His Majesty the King Emperor in his prolonged illness and fervently pray that God may grant him a speedy recovery. A copy of this resolution to be forwarded to His Excellency the Viceroy.
- (2) That the future constitution of India should be on the basis of responsible Government with Dominion Status under the British Crown and should be in the form of a Federation of fully autonomous State.
- (3) There shall be full responsible Government in the provinces and all the departments including law and order should be responsible to the provincial legislatures, and that the provincial legislatures should be unicameral.
- (4) The Central Government shall deal with such subjects as concern the whole of India, i. e., defence, foreign affairs, inter-provincial relations, relation with the Princes' states, All-India communications, fiscal policy, customs, currency and the like, all other subjects being placed in charge of the provincial Government which shall be vested with residuary power.

(5) That the same form of Government shall be introduced in N. W. F., Beluchistan provinces as in other provinces in British India. Sindh should be constituted into a separate province.

(6) That the Conference cordially approves of the adult franchise as the goal which every endeavour should be made to attain as soon as possible; but in the meantime the franchise should be placed on a wider basis than the present system.

(7) Electoral colleges are unacceptable and that all social electorates e.g., the Bengal Landholders, the Mahajan Sabha, Marwari Association, the Indian National Chamber of Commerce etc., should be abolished and the British community will elect their representatives through their own separate electorate.

(8) In the Central Legislature the Muslim representation shall not be less than one-third.

(9) That in order to secure proper and smooth working of full responsible Government in the provinces and the participation of both the communities in the administration it is necessary and expedient that in no province the representation of the non-Muslim or Muslim minorities should be less than one-third of the total number in the Council; subject to above the representation of these two divisions in the provincial legislature shall be in proportion to their respective population. Further that the same proportion of representation should be observed in the elected local bodies.

(10) That the provision of the constitution shall not be repealed or amended in any way unless each of the provincial legislatures constituting the Federation and the Central legislature have agreed to the same by a three fourth majority.

(11) The Governor-General-in-Council shall have the power in case of widespread disorder and disturbance which the provincial Government is unable to cope with to interfere with a view to restore the normal working of the constitution in the province concerned.

(12) The representation of communal groups shall continue to be by means of separate electorates as at present.

(13) Any territorial redistribution that might at any time be necessary shall not in any way affect the Moslem majority in the Punjab, Bengal, North-Western Province and Sindh and Beluchistan.

(14) Full religious liberty, i.e., liberty of belief, worship, observances, propaganda, association and education shall be guaranteed to all communities.

(15) That in the recruitment of the public services due regard be paid not only solely to academic qualifications of the candidates, but to the need for securing the widest possible confidence in the administration by averting a communal or class monopoly and that in no case shall be less than the proportion of Mussalmans in the legislatures, Provincial and Central; for effectuating the above-mentioned objects all necessary measures be adopted.

## The U. P. Muslim All-Parties Conference.

The U. P. Muslim All-Parties' Conference commenced its proceedings at Cwnnpore, on the 4TH NOVEMBER 1928 at 4-30 p.m. Among those present were the Raja of Salimpur, Nawab Jamsheer Ali Khan, Nawab Ismail Khan, Mr. Fazal Ibrahim Rahimtullah, Nawab Ali Hassan Khan, Nawab Murtaza Hussain Khan, Mr. Kidwai, Dr. Shaffat Ahmed Khan, Moulana Sbaifi Daudi, Mr. Hasrat Mohani and a few other prominent Maulanas and members of the community.

### Welcome Address.

Khan Bahadur Hafiz Hidayat Hussain, welcoming the delegates, said that the Conference had been summoned to arrive at a via media for the betterment of the community. Moslems stood for complete independence. It was regrettable that they had to determine their own share in the future Government of the country. The majority community was not in the least charitable towards them. The Nehru Report had taken no account of the present position and the condition of the Moslems and their point of view. It was therefore a one-sided production. No Moslem had shared in its preparation, Mr. Shuaib

Qureshi having left the committee in despair, and Sir Ali Imam having attended only one sitting. The greatest draw-back of the Nehru Report, said the speaker, was that power was concentrated in the Central Government, where Moslems would always remain in a minority. He advocated federal system of Government which would provide for provinces where the Moslem majority could retaliate the treatment meted out to their community in the Hindu Provinces. He also criticised the dictum of the committee on separate electorates which, he said, were essential to the political education of their community. He was also opposed to adult suffrage which could not be availed of by Moslems, for their women lived under purdah. In conclusion he put forth seven demands of the Moslems : (1) separate electorates should be maintained in all legislative and autonomous bodies including universities and intermediate education boards, etc; (2) reservation of seats should continue as at present; (3) no legislative measure should be permissible if opposed by three-fourths of their community; (4) one-third of the appointments in all departments should be given to Muslims except in the police and Army where the 50 per cent ratio should be maintained; (5) a half share in provincial Government should be granted to Muslims; and (6) one-third share in the Central Government should be maintained and (7) protection for the Urdu language should be afforded.

### Moulana Shaukat Ali's Presidential Address.

In the course of his presidential address, Maulana Shaukat Ali said that he was a humble servant of Islam and his motherland. He stood for a heart to heart and real understanding between the Hindus and Moslems, and had not changed his ideals. Circumstances had forced him to speak what he was going to say that day.

He was proud of the Moslem sacrifice and suffering of 1920 and 1921 which emancipated the Congress from a crawling situation and placed it on a glorious and successful career. Moslems contributed about Rs. 60 lakhs towards the National and Khilafat funds and went to jail in untold numbers. Many national papers such as Pandit Motilal Nehru's "Independent" were subsidised out of these funds, and Mahatma Gandhi toured in the country at their expense. Everything was then thought to be glorious. The times however had changed and the blind passion of communal hatred had created blood-shed and ruin in the whole country. Several well-organised pre-arranged violent attacks were made on Moslems who suffered all patiently, and their leaders asked them to behave with their sister community as brothers. Moslem gentlemanliness was still manifest in the conduct of certain Moslems who were siding with Hindus on the issue of the Nehru report.

We could have wiped out a community by annihilating the Hindus when we were rulers of India and wielded absolute powers. But Islam never wanted us to crush down the weak. But in spite of all this, the Hindus with their leaders of to-day, were deadily opposed to Moslems and their just interests. The Hindus were well organised by virtue of the Maha Sabha, and he failed to find any thoughtful Hindu who could check its aggressive and hostile activities. Much less did he find parallel Moslem organisations which could balance these activities.

The Maulana said that he asked Pandit Nehru at the time of the Calcutta riots to control the unruly Hindus, but he could not spare time on account of elections. The Maulana desired to let the Hindus understand that Moslems could not be subdued under any circumstances. They were brave, unyielding by nature. He instanced the Assembly resolution regarding the granting of Reforms to the North-West Frontier Provinces, to show that Pandit Motilal Nehru and the Swaraj Party were not unbiassed. Further, he referred to the Simla Unity Conference, which has failed due to Hindu obduracy. He detailed the course of events relating to the Unity Conference at Calcutta and the Madras Congress which had arrived at certain amicable decisions which were later confirmed by the All-India Moslem League and the Khilafat Conference as well as the Jamiat-ul-ulema. But Pandit Motilal Nehru made persistent efforts both at the Delhi and Bombay All-Parties Conference to undo the Madras Congress achievements. He was grieved at present to observe that no Hindu was available who could say that the Madras Congress was right and the Nehru report was wrong. Hindus had been habituated to slavery, and they would remain slaves for long. But the Mussalmans were a freedom-loving people and could not submit to either Hindu or British rule.

The Maulana said he wanted unity but could brook no insult to Moslems. He desired the Hindus to declare in clear terms whether they wanted peace or a civil war. If they wanted war, Moslems were prepared to take up the challenge any moment. Even though the Hindu Mahasabha might organise Hindus and prepare them by means of born-fighters as they were. If they wanted peace then the methods adopted by them for the purpose had so far resulted only in bloodshed and brought the future hopes of the

country and national life to zero point. He was against the Nehru report because it had been prepared with a view to remove the Hindu Mahasabha's grievances and bring the moderates into the national movement. He could not congratulate Pandit Motilal Nehru because he was responsible for reopening the decisions of the Madras Congress not only on constitutional points, but also on communal adjustments. Mr. Shauaib Qureshi had been duped into appending his signature to a thing which he disapproved. He was influenced upon with undue tactics to withdraw his dissent and before he could get the wrong righted, the report was published. Even at the All-Parties' Conference there was little consideration given to the voice of the Maulana who kept quiet because of hostile demonstrations by some of his Moslem brethren. He was glad to find that the Moslems of the country in general agreed with him and gave him their best support by conferring upon him the honour of presiding over the Conference for which he was most thankful. In conclusion the Maulana asked the Mussalmans to organise themselves for ten years at least with untiring energy and incessant labour so as to make their position unshakable. This was the particular moment for sustained efforts as there was danger to Islam in their negligence.

### SECOND DAY—5TH NOVEMBER 1928.

The Subjects Committee of the Conference which met on this day was not open to the press. Two hundred and six persons registered themselves as delegates; three associations did not send any delegates on the ground that they were not political bodies. There was separate seating arrangements for Purdah ladies. The attendance including delegates, visitors and volunteers, ranged between 600 and 800. To-day's sitting of the Conference lasted about three hours. Five resolutions were moved.

#### Support of All-Parties Moslem Conference.

The first resolution ran as follows :—"The All-Parties' Moslem Conference, U. P., fully appreciate the proposal to hold an All-India All-Parties' Moslem Conference at Delhi, and realising fully the urgency of such a conference requests and calls upon the U. P. Moslems to join the All-Parties' Conference, and make it a great success."

This was moved by K. B. Hafiz Hidayat Hussain, and seconded by Mr. Mushir Hussain Quidwai.

#### Representative Character of Conference Challenged

During discussion Mr. Murtaza Husain Abdi wanted to make a statement before the conference, to the effect, that the All-Parties' U. P. Moslem Conference was constituted by men who had either no opinion or ever if they had any, were anti-National and anti-Hindu, and could not claim to be a body representative of all shades of Moslem opinion. A packed audience like that could not have the moral right to speak in the name of all the Mussalmans in the provinces. He further took objection to the presidential address which he styled as a "phillipic," and as full of vituperation against those who were not ready to lose their heads like the Maulana. Mr. Abdi felt it a veritable agony to hear the Maulana in that strain attributing motives to all those Hindu and Moslem leaders who had the misfortune to differ from him and support the Nehru report. The unfortunate Maharaja of Mahmudabad had been unceremoniously handled by men, who if they were worth their salt, should feel eternally grateful to the Maharaja. He wanted the conference to know that the Moslem opinion in U. P. was preponderately for joint electorate and the Nehru report. The reactionaries should not forget that it was difficult, nay, impossible to deceive people by raising the cry of 'Islam in danger.'

As the speaker began to read his statement he was hooted from all quarters and was required to quit the hall. The President asked the speaker not to proceed with his statement, which was a reflection on the conference, but to speak only on the resolution before the conference, if he so desired. As the speaker was not allowed to read his statement, he left the hall. The resolution was then passed.

#### Federal Government Favoured.

The second resolution stated :—"In the opinion of this House, the future constitution should be a federal one in which provinces and Indian States should be given full autonomy, enjoying fullest freedom in matters of internal administration. The Central Government should have the right to exercise authority in matters which concern the whole country. In the opinion of this House any system of Government which conflicts with the above mentioned principles will in no case be acceptable to Moslems."

Maulana Hasrat Mohani, in moving the resolution, said that he was not opposed to the Nehru Report, provided it was amended in certain respects. He could not regard a unitary system of Government as suited to the present disturbed condition of the country. The federal system, on the other hand, would give equal opportunity to each community to behave with others fit for fit. Separation of Sindh according to the report could be effected only on acquiring Dominion Status which could not be had for fifty years to come, and therefore meant a vain hope for Moslems.

Maulana Hussain Ahmed moved an amendment that the following words be added to the resolution: "Whether it is framed by the Nehru Committee or Simon Commission or any other body". The amendment being accepted by the mover, the resolution was passed without opposition.

### Separate Electorates Suggested.

The third resolution on separate electorate was moved by Mr. Zahur Ahmed, which declared that in view of the circumstances prevailing in the country, the Mussalmans of the United Provinces were not prepared to give up separate electorates.

The mover said that Moslems were not prepared to relinquish this sacred right. They did not want a change of masters from the English to the Hindu, for slavery under the latter would be all the more intolerable. Let not the Hindus think themselves to be masters virtue of their majority. Communal riots were not the result of separate electorates, but were due to the Hindus' unjustifiable attitude in regard to cow sacrifice and music before mosques. Unfair treatment of Moslems by Hindu leaders was well demonstrated in Mr. Asaf Ali's election struggle at Delhi.

Mr. Hafizur Ahmad, Editor, "Aligarh Mail," seconding the resolution, said that joint electorates working fully in U. S. A. did not eschew religious animosity as was evident in the presidential election of America. He further pointed out that the experience of the working of joint electorates in special constituencies did not advance any hopes for Moslems.

Mr. Hafiz Mahomed Sidique opposed the resolution, for he could not subscribe to the view that communal electorates were a proper remedy for the undisputable evil of Moslems being in a minority. The best was to make the Hindus come to their doors in search for votes, and thus make them agreeable to Moslems. The speaker was subjected to continuous interruptions, and had to sit down ultimately.

Hafiz Mahomed Usman, Secretary, Khilafat Committee, Aligarh, also spoke in favour of joint electorates. The audience was not prepared to give him a patient hearing, and the President had to exert his influence over the audience to allow him to proceed. His speech was then interrupted by numberless interrogations. In the short time allowed to him, he said that elections to district boards of the Punjab were conducted on the basis of joint electorates and even though the Hindus were in a majority in certain districts, the Moslems were represented far above their numerical strength.

Maulana Shaikat Ali, intervening, corrected the speaker by saying that the Punjab was a province where Moslems were in a majority. On the whole, they had to think of the provinces where Moslems were in a minority.

The speaker proceeding said that the best way for keeping Lala Lajpat Rai and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya "who were always anxious to suck the blood of Moslems" out of the legislature, was to resort to joint electorates.

About half a dozen persons followed in support of the resolution, the general trend of the arguments being that it was unwise to make another experiment of the trusting Hindus which had been tried and found unsuccessful.

Mr. Kidwai was another who opposed the resolution, and cited instances of advanced Moslem countries like Turkey, Afghanistan and Persia who were progressing and enjoying freedom simply because they got rid of such evil considerations. They could not possibly enjoy freedom from British Imperialism unless they arrived at some understanding with the majority community.

Mr. Zahur Ahmad, replying to the opposition, said that Moslem minority of 15 versus 85 per cent could not be effective enough to gain an advantage over communally minded Hindus in joint electorates.

### Safeguards for Moslems.

The next resolution read as follows: "In the opinion of this conference, with a view to protect the interests of Moslems, the following safeguards in the constitution of India are absolutely necessary: (1) adequate and effective Moslem representation should be provided by means of separate electorates in all legislative and other bodies created and controlled by the legislature, (2) representation of the Moslems in various Provincial

Cabinets as well as the Imperial Executive Council shall not be less than 1/3. (3) neither the Central nor Provincial Legislatures shall make any law affecting Moslems which is repugnant to the personal law of Moslems, (4) Moslems shall be provided with every facility for teaching Urdu, Arabic, Persian and the development of their culture, (5) full protection should be granted to mosques, cemeteries, Khangas and slaughter houses and other religious and charitable institutions of the Moslems, (6) Mussalman shall not be compelled to perform any act which constitutes a violation of their faith or religious observances, and shall not be placed under any disability by reason of their refusal to perform the same. (7) the moslem community should be secured effective and adequate representation in the public services. (8) Moslem representation shall not be less than one-third in the Indian Legislature. (9) an adequate share shall be secured for the use of Moslems in respect of all grants allocated for educational, industrial, charitable, social and religious institutions. (10) any law, bye-law, rule, regulation or official action which is repugnant to the above provisions or which conflicts or interferes with them shall be void and of no effect. (11) it will be open to any citizen to question the legality of any law, bye-law, rule, regulation and official action under the above provisions or any proceeding arising in respect of the same by a petition for decision to the Supreme Court. (12) the Viceroy of India shall have the power to determine and declare and suspend any law or bye-law, which is repugnant to the said provision. (13) the Indian Legislature shall not have the power to amend, repeal or in any manner interfere with the provisions of the constitution affecting the fundamental right of the people or the safeguards provided for the interests of the minority. (4) the Secretary of State for India should be given full powers of enforcing the safeguards for the protection of the interests of minority, and in case of continued failure of any authority controlled and created by law to carry out the safeguards it will be open to the Secretary of State to deprive that authority of its powers, and take over the administration of such departments under his direct control.

Mr. Masoodul Hassan moved the above resolution. It was seconded by Nawab Jamshed Ali Khan. The resolution as moved originally had to be referred to a special committee for redrafting, as certain members of the audience desired a change in its phraseology.

The Committee after a few minutes' consultation presented the resolution to the Conference in the above form, and it was accepted unanimously.

#### Discussion on Independence Resolution.

An incident of some interest occurred in the Subjects Committee when Maulana Azad Subhani proposed that the Conference should declare itself in favour of complete independence.

Khan Bahadur Masoodul Hassan and some other persons objected to such declaration, which, in their opinion, would go against the best interests of Mussalman.

Upon this, a number of women from their purdah gallery sent a written statement to the President saying that if men had not the courage to stand for complete independence, women would come out of purdah, and take their place in the struggle for independence.

Maulana Azad Subhani moved in the open Conference the following resolution:—"In the opinion of the All-Parties' U. P. Moslem Conference, Mussalman of India stand for the goal of complete independence, which shall necessarily take the form of a federal republic."

In the opinion of the mover, Islam always taught freedom, and for the matter of that the Moslems of India would fail in their religious duty, if they were against complete independence. Though Indian Moslems were poor yet they were, the speaker was sure, devoted to Islam more than any people on earth.

After a couple of more persons had spoken, the resolution was supported by Mrs. Hasrat Mohani, who said that she would ask the audience to go a step further, and declare in favour of "Soviet republic" where the rich and poor would live under the same constitution. The resolution being put to vote was passed unanimously with the one dissentient voice of Mr. Mahomed Shafi.

#### Constructive Work.

The next resolution enjoined on every thoughtful Moslem to do some piece of constructive work by organising night schools, public lectures, libraries and reading rooms, and inducing Moslems to do some sort of commercial business to improve their economical status. The resolution was moved by Maulana Shafi Daudi, and seconded by Maulana Shaukat Ali himself and was passed unanimously.

The last resolution approved a list of twenty delegates to the All-Parties' Moslem Conference at Delhi.

In his closing speech, Maulana Shaukat Ali thanked the delegates and members of the Reception Committee for their efforts to make the Conference a success. After a vote of thanks to the chair, the Conference was dissolved.

## The B. & O. Muslim All-Parties Conference.

A compromise having been brought about through the efforts of Dr. Ansari, the Bihar and Orissa All-Parties' Moslem Conference met at Patna on the 9TH DECEMBER 1928 as one united body representing all shades of Moslem opinion under the presidency of Maulana Mahomed Ali. A large number of delegates from all over the Province were present, and among these were Dr. Mahmud, Mr. Shah Zubair, Khan Bahadur Ismail, Mr. Shafi Daudi, and Mr. Azad Subhani.

Maulana Mahomed Ali's presidential address was his first public pronouncement on the Nehru Report. In his address, the Maulana said whether the Nehru Report was good or bad, he would not consent to be under British domination. If they wanted to keep and make Islamic countries free, they should free India first from slavery. He wanted India to be ruled by Indians. He would not accept British, Hindu or Moslem Raj. All religions must be for God, and he was a believer in God's rule. He declared that in matters on which there was any commandment of God, he was a Moslem first, and a Moslem last, and nothing but a Moslem; but in matters relating to the good of India, he was an Indian first and an Indian last, and nothing but an Indian.

Moslems were not sent to the world to conquer half of it. They were sent to the world to convert the whole of it, and to conquer the hearts of all men and bring them into the fold of Islam. This could be achieved only by service and not by force. He would not give up his religious principles to please the Hindus. If they could not get rid of British rule, and there was no alternative but a Hindu Raj, he would prefer that Hindu Raj. When the British were gone, Mussalmans should demand their rights from Hindus, and the Hindus would give them the rights; but if the Hindus did not then concede those rights, they could get those rights even by force. They should not fear the majority. Islam's history taught them to trust God and have faith in their inherent strength.

In the days of the East India Company, the beat of drum was accompanied by the cry "Creation is God's, the country is the King's, and the rule is that of John Company Bahadur." The Nehru report in a nutshell meant that the creation was God's, the country was the Viceroy's or of the Parliament's and the rule was Hindu Mahasabha's. That was the meaning of accepting Dominion Status and yet denying Mussalmans' protection. They were not prepared to accept that position. It was said that no compromise was possible regarding Moslem demands, and that all such demands were characterised as communalism. But Pandit Motilal Nehru himself compromised with Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, the Raja of Mahmudabad and Sir Ali Imam and accepted Dominion Status. He quoted history to show that there had never been a majority rule in India; but for the first time now, the Government of the country was going to be a majority rule. And yet communalism was only too rampant in both the great communities one of which was in a majority of 66 per cent and the other in a minority of 25 per cent.

If the minority put forward safeguards for the protection of its rights how could it be said that it was against the principles of human nature? They had learnt from Mahatma Gandhi not to haggle like a Bania (shopkeeper) but to make their minimum demand on the basis of the Madras Congress and Calcutta Moslem League resolutions and to stick to it. Objections were raised to the extensions of the Reforms to the North-West Frontier Province and separation of Sind, because these had a Moslem majority. Even in the provinces where Moslems had a majority, the Nehru Report was so planned as to counteract the influence of that Moslem majority by having too dominant a Central Government at Delhi.

The President's complaint was against the present Hindu mentality. He had no need to suggest amendments to the Nehru Report. Those responsible for the report would modify it themselves in the course of time. He asked the Hindus to change their present mentality. A change of heart on the part of the Hindus would enable both the Hindus and the Moslems to work together for their country. At present only too many Hindu leaders professed to be Nationalists, but were only communalists at heart. But only too many Moslem leaders professed or even boasted to be communalists, but were only self-seekers at heart. The nation was being exploited by both to its ruin (applause).



# The All-India Christian Conference.

The fifteenth session of the All-India Conference of Indian Christians met at Madras on the 28TH DECEMBER 1928 under the presidency of the Rev. J. C. Chatterji, in the St. Pauls' High School Buildings, Vepery. Delegates from all parts of India attended the conference. Prominent among those present were Dewan Bahadur R. N. Arokiaswami Mudaliar, Dr. C. Muthu, Mr. and Mrs. M. D. Devadoss, Prof. S. F. Ranganatham, Rev. Mukherji, Messrs. George Joseph, V. Chakkarai, S. Balasingam Satya, Rallia Ram, P. B. Buntur, N. Jordan, O. F. E. Zacharias and Prof. S. K. Roy. The proceedings commenced with prayers.

## Rev. Chatterji's Address.

Rev. Chatterji, the President, after being installed in the Chair delivered his address in which he first referred to His Majesty the King-Emperor's protracted illness and expressed the respectful sympathy of the Christian community of India and their humble and earnest prayers for His Majesty's speedy and complete recovery. Continuing, he said that very recently one of their foremost leaders and patriots had passed beyond the veil, the late lamented Lala Lajpat Rai. Every Indian must be proud of his work, as an indefatigable worker for social reform and a national benefactor who gave his time and substance to the cause of education and the uplift of the depressed and the suffering. He would be ever remembered as a example of a practical patriot, whose fervent nationalism found expression in a life of hard work and devoted service to his countrymen. May his example inspire us. To his memory we pay our respectful homage, and offer to his family and fellow-workers the deep and sincere sympathy of our community. To me, personally, it will ever remain a proud memory, that the late Lalaji gave me his whole-hearted support in carrying the resolution that I moved during the last session of the Assembly for the furtherance of women's education and that one of his last speeches in the House was made in support of my resolution.

## The Simon Commission.

On the question of the Indian Statutory Commission, the President observed : "Reviewing the events of the year, that is now almost ended, the sojourn of the Indian Statutory Commission in the country stands out as the one, which has caused the greatest excitement in the country. The attitude of our Conference, which is almost the only recognised All-India Organisation of the Indian Christian Community, has met with a good deal of comment, both favourable and unfavourable. It is, therefore, my duty to explain as far as I can the action taken by us in this matter. Mr. Rallia Ram in his presidential address at the Allahabad Conference, gave a statesmanlike and wise lead in the matter of our attitude towards the Simon Commission. He told us that we had no desire to take advantage of an unhappy situation and that while we could not be a willing party to any method, that we regarded as inimical to the best interests of the country, or as not in harmony with the ethical standard of our Master, we would not ask for any special privileges for our own community, nor press for any system of representation in the Legislatures or the public service, that were regarded as harmful to the growth of a united nation by our national leaders. The question of co-operation with the Commission was the subject of long discussion at our Conference last year. The resolution that was passed there by a very large majority of votes, condemned the non-inclusion of Indians in the Statutory Commission. It humbly expressed the opinion that a policy of boycott may seriously prejudice the best interests of the nation and respectfully urged the national leaders to draw up a memorandum and to submit it to the Commission for the consideration of the Imperial Parliament. In all that we

have done in connection with the visit of the Commission, we have tried to faithfully carry out the mandate given by the Allahabad Conference.

In the course of the debate in the Legislative Assembly on the subject of co-operation with the Commission, I, as the only representative of Indian Christians in that House, made it quite clear that our community believed that it was at one with the rest of its fellow-countrymen in asking for an advance to the goal of Dominion Status and that while it desired to ask for no special privileges or concessions from the Commission, it was willing to co-operate with the Commission, believing that good-will and not suspicion ought to be its guiding principle in all relations of public and private life.

The memorandum which we presented to the Commission and the oral evidence given by the small deputation, representing this Conference, has been before you and I do not wish to take the time of this gathering by referring to it at any length.

It is a matter of deep thankfulness to us, that apart from the question of presenting or withholding any memorandum to the Commission, our memorandum and oral evidence have met with practically unanimous approval and commendation from all sections of the Press in India and the document was described by Sir John Simon as "about the best the Commission had received".

#### Communal Electorates.

In certain quarters, doubts have been cast on our sincerity, in asking for the abolition of communal electorates and of nominated seats on the Legislatures. A member of the Central Committee went so far as to suggest to us, that we hoped that a large minority community would fight the battle for communal reservations so that we might reap the benefit. He also warned us that, if our plea for general electorates was accepted, no Indian Christian would find a place either on the Central or on the Provincial Legislatures. On behalf of the deputation as well as of the writers of the memorandum, I take this opportunity of reaffirming with all the sincerity I am capable of, that we are perfectly honest about our submission. We fully realize that till such time, as religion or what goes under the name of religion, continues to dominate Indian politics, Indian Christians have little chance of securing any adequate representation through general electorates, either on the Legislatures or Local Bodies. But in all humility we are prepared to face this handicap for a time, so far as our particular community is concerned, in response to a higher duty to the nation as a whole and the full hope that if we are called upon to make a sacrifice, it will not be in vain. The fact that all but one member of the deputation were or had been nominated members of Legislatures and yet definitely and unanimously pressed for the abolition of nominations, ought to be some proof of the honesty of our intentions.

#### Work in the Assembly.

The point of view adopted by us in our dealings with the Statutory Commission, has been my guide, in my work as your representative in the Legislative Assembly. I take this opportunity of stating that I went into the Legislative Assembly, not as a politician but as a humble social and educational worker. I represent in the House a community, which does not stand for any particular political policy, and whose claims for consideration are based on public service and not on political achievement. I have, therefore, abstained almost entirely from taking part in political debates with the exception of the one to which I have already referred. I believe that as a representative of the Christian community and because of my position as a nominated member, it is my duty to support with my vote the Government in measures, that it considers essential for the safety and good Government of the country. "Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's" is the command given to us by our Lord who Himself lived and worked under a foreign domination, much more, autocratic and rigid than the British Government has been at any time of its rule in India. No Government or any other human institution can be perfect. I honestly believe, and so far as I can gauge, so do the vast majority of the Christian community, that a policy of constructive and judicious co-operation

with the Government of the time, is far more fruitful than one of obstruction and harassment.

In social matters I have tried to do my little bit, by participation in debates and by bringing to the public notice the needs of education, social reform and public health.

#### Recruitment and Appointments.

So far as the interests of our own Community are concerned, I have followed throughout the policy of asking for no special favours and have always pressed that merit alone, should be the guiding consideration, for appointments to the Public services, but whenever I have found that individual members of the Indian Christian community have been passed over, to make room for those of more favoured communities and also whenever I have seen disabilities placed on our people, I have done what I could by interpellation as well as by representation, to bring the matter to the notice of the Government. While on this subject, I would like to draw the attention of Government, to certain serious disabilities imposed on our community. Indian Christians are practically debarred from recruitment in the Indian Army, except in a Sapper Regiment in Madras or as camp followers. In the Punjab where our rural Christians are as fine a body of men, as any of the so called martial races and supplied a whole Battalion during the Great War, recruitment in only one Company of the Territorial Force is open to them. Early this year we waited in deputation on the Adjutant-General to point out our disabilities. But I much regret that the reply given was hardly satisfactory. Indian Christians are not only debarred from recruitment, but I have papers in my possession which show, how a non-commissioned Indian officer with a splendid record of service, was discharged from His Majesty's Army apparently for no other reason than that of his conversion to Christianity. Information has been received that the Punjab Government have by departmental instructions, forbidden the recruitment of Indian-Christians as Police constables. Such discrimination is clearly against the declared policy of the Government of India and contrary to the pledges given in the famous Proclamation of Her late Majesty the Queen-Empress. We ask no favours or preferential treatment anywhere but we should not be accused of communal bias if we submit, that we in common with our other countrymen, have an equal right of service in the Army and the forces of law and order. We appeal to Government, as well as to our own public men, for the redress of these unmerited disabilities.

#### Attitude towards the Nehru Report.

There is no doubt, that the outstanding national achievement of the year is the Nehru Report. Even if the Indian Statutory Commission results in no great advance for India, its appointment will not have been in vain, for the preparation by the people themselves of the first constructive Constitution for India in the shape of the Nehru Report has been largely due to the stirring of the political waters of India, by the arrival of the Commission. The Nehru Report is a document to be proud of and deserves the earnest consideration of every patriotic Indian. While we pay our tribute to the great ability, the honesty of purpose, industry, and patriotism of its framers, I would not be honest if I said, that we are prepared to accept the report in its entirety or subscribe to it as a community, in the exact terms in which it stands at present. We realize that the framers of the report have had the most difficult of problems to face and that they have shown much courage. It cannot, however, be denied that they have paid but little heed to the interests or existence of minorities like those of our own.

We have often found fault with Government for ignoring the just rights and aspirations of minorities, in order to please the more important communities. This objection applies with equal force to the Nehru Report. It has gone out of its way to satisfy the demands of the most powerful minority community of India, it has spent much time and labour to bring round an important minority like the Sikhs, but it has ignored the Christian community and other minorities. If the framers of the report could have taken even a more long-sighted view and had refused to recommend communal representation of any kind, we would not have had a word of complaint to utter. But since they have seen fit to make a

special case of the largest majority community in certain provinces and of the strongest minority community in other provinces, we ask as stated by our representative at Lucknow, that in fairness and justice a similar recognition be granted to the third largest community in India, namely the Indian Christian community. We are also unable to accord our support to the immediate application of adult suffrage. In the present state of education in India, it is not practicable and if given effect to will result in anything but a democratic form of Government.

#### The needs of the Community.

Mostly owing to circumstances over which we have had no control, the vast majority of the educated section of our community has looked to service under Government or in connection with Missionary societies, as the chief means of livelihood. That is responsible for our highly unsatisfactory economic condition and is already resulting in an appalling growth of unemployment. Our growing numbers and the gradual retrenchment of the activities of Missionary societies reduces the opportunities of usefulness in that sphere every year.

There is nothing wrong in our seeking to make our contribution to the public services. But surely, there is something very unsound in any community looking to Government employment as their principal or most sought after field of work. It is that, which leads to continual wranglings and importunities for the crumbs of office. The present difficult position of the Anglo-Indian Community ought in this respect to be a lesson to us. In the field of trade, business, or industry, the contribution of our community is a complete blank. It is time that we should guide our youth to this field, which adds to the National wealth and gives to individuals real independence. In professions like that of Law, Medicine, Engineering and so forth, our people are few and far between. At any rate, in North India, there are hardly any of our young men in the professional colleges.

The economic situation of the community needs the earnest thought of our leaders. The lack of means combined with the absence of enterprise, is the reason which has kept many of our young men, from qualifying themselves for these useful profession. Those of our people who have the means, can render a great service by providing scholarships to enable our young men to enter professional colleges or to receive commercial training. I commend this task to the earnest attention of our Provincial Associations and Conferences. An able and devoted ministry, worthy to be leaders of their flock is essential for our community. But so long as we depend on our Missionary brethren for religious and social guidance, as well as for the support of our Churches, can we expect the growth of an independent and able indigenous ministry?

To my mind all our talk about Church unity is premature, for by whatever names we may like to distinguish our churches, practically none of them have achieved an independent Church life. Till then we can only talk of the union of Missionary Societies and not of the Indian Church. I must also frankly state my belief that Church unity as well as the establishment of a truly National Church, can only be achieved by spontaneous enthusiasm resulting from indigenous movements from within the Indian Christian community and not by elaborate Conferences or constitution-making, on Western lines functioning largely under Western guidance."

#### Resolutions.

After the Presidential address was over the Conference was adjourned but met again in the evening to discuss resolutions. The following resolutions were put from the Chair and passed:—

I. "This Conference conveys to his Most Gracious Majesty the King Emperor through H. E. the Viceroy its feelings of loyalty and devotion to his person and earnestly prays for his speedy and complete recovery from the recent illness which has caused great anxiety throughout the country."

II. "This Conference places on record its deep sense of loss sustained by the country in the deaths of Lala Lajpat Rai, S. R. Das, Lord Sinha, the Raja of Panagal, Bishop Westcott of Lucknow and Dr. Janvier of Allahabad and expresses its heart-felt sympathy and condolences with the relatives of the deceased."

III. "Resolved that this Conference do approve of the memorandum submitted by the All-India Council on its behalf to the Royal Statutory Commission and of the oral evidence tendered at Delhi on its behalf by its representatives before the Commission."

### Support to Nehru Report.

Mr. V. Chakkarai moved the following resolution :—

IV. "Resolved that this Session of the All-India Christian Conference, places on record its general approval of the Nehru Report, and especially the following proposals for the future political constitution of our Motherland : (i) that it gives its whole-hearted adherence to the declaration of the goal of our political aspirations as Dominion Status, i.e., India shall have the same constitution and status in the community of nations known as the British Empire as the Dominion of Canada, the Commonwealth of Australia, the Dominion of New Zealand, the Union of South Africa and the Irish Free State ; and, (ii) that it emphasises the need for a strong central Government, without unduly detracting from the freedom and authority of provincial administration ; and is strongly of opinion that the interests of the minorities have not been sufficiently safeguarded and that the position assigned to the depressed and backward classes is far from satisfactory."

### AN AMENDMENT.

Mr. B. L. Rallia Ram moved the following amendment in place of the last clause in the resolution :—

"The Conference would have been extremely gratified if the authors of the Nehru Report had recommended the complete abrogation of the communal representation in all its forms. It regrets that it should have found it necessary to give protection to the two largest and most powerful communities in India wherever they are in a minority. So long as this position is maintained by the national leaders, the other existing well-defined minorities are justified in pressing for a similar protection."

### Recruitment to the Army.

On the motion of Dr. A. C. Asirvadhya Nadar seconded by Mr. Y. A. Hongal, the following resolution was next adopted :—

V. "The All-India Conference of Indian Christians reiterates its protests against the serious disabilities placed on the community in the matter of recruitment for the non-commissioned ranks of the Indian Army. It claims that Indian Christians have an equal right with the other sections of the population for service in the Army. The Conference expresses its disappointment at the unsatisfactory nature of the reply given by the Adjutant-General to their deputation which waited on him in this connection. The Conference desires to point out emphatically that any policy of discrimination which debars a man from entering public service because of his religion is entirely contrary to the declared policy of Government and presses for the removal of this entirely unmerited disability."

### Representation in the Service.

Mr. S. K. Roy then moved the following resolution :—

VI. "The Conference notes with regret that in making appointments to or promotions in the judiciary and public services in India, the legitimate and reasonable claims of the Indian Christian community have been often overlooked for political and communal considerations. It strongly urges that in the competition for such appointments and promotions between the major communities, the authorities concerned should not take the fact of one being a Christian, as a bar to his merits and claims being recognised. It instructs the Executive Committee of the Council to prepare a statement and bring it to the attention of the Government and the country."

Mr. George S. Isaac seconded the motion which was then put and carried.

### Other Resolutions.

VII. "As this Conference is informed that the National Christian Council has before it the question of the revision of the Indian Christian Marriage Act and as

this is a matter which affects vitally the Indian Christian community, this conference resolves to appoint a committee (1) to prepare a report on this subject outlining the general principles on which the new Act should be based (if the report is approved by the executive committee it should be presented to the National Christian Council or to any committee appointed by it) and (2) to request the National Christian Council to arrange if possible a joint sitting of the two committees."

VII. "This conference gives its hearty support to the appeal (for total prohibition, and for full Indian control of excise policy and for the gradual abolition of excise revenue) to the British Parliament and people through the Indian Statutory Commission set forth in the memorial to the Commission entitled India's Excise Demand dated 5th November, 1928 forwarded to the Commission by the Rev. J. F. Edwards of Bombay. They earnestly request the Indian Statutory Commission to recommend that India's future constitution shall include provisions for ensuring that India's desire as expressed in that appeal shall be granted."

IV. "This conference requests the Central and Provincial Governments that in all their efforts for the amelioration of the social and economic condition of the backward and depressed classes no discrimination be made between the Christian and non-Christian sections of the depressed classes."

X. "This conference welcomes the proposal which it believes is engaging the attention of the National Christian Council in regard to making a survey of the conditions of oppression which certain classes of the people of India are suffering under and appoints a committee composed of representatives from various provinces in India to co-operate with the National Christian Council in conducting the survey."

## The Sikh League.

The annual session of the Sikh League met at Gujranwala on the 22nd October 1928. Mr. Autarsingh, Chairman of the Reception Committee, in the course of his address, declared, that the Simon Commission was a standing insult to India, and exhorted the Sikhs to continue the boycott of the Commission and taboo co-operators. The Nehru report, he declared, was a fitting reply to the challenge of Lord Birkenhead, but the Lucknow decisions were not sacrosanct. He urged that there should be one principle for all provinces and declared that communal representation was regarded by the Sikhs as a deadly poison, which should not be permitted. They could not tolerate that poison to continue in operation through communal representation being given to one community. The Sikhs made no prayer to the Government, but would create a majority in the Congress, and get the poison removed. In conclusion, he exhorted the Sikhs to stand shoulder to shoulder in the battle for freedom. The Sikhs had not spared efforts for the release of political prisoners, but they had not succeeded in making any impression on the Government. They had to find another way to secure the prisoners' release, by courting imprisonment.

### The Presidential Address.

"If the Nehru report is not trampled under foot, I shall cease to be a member of the Sikh League" declared Sardar Kharak Singh in his extempore presidential address to the Sikh League on the 22nd October.

The Nehru report, he added, was one to be looked down upon with shame, as having lowered the Indian ideal, and for having stated that Dominion Status was acceptable. Dr. Ansari and Pandit Motilal Nehru stated at the Lucknow Conference that Indians must be prepared to die to win Swaraj. If they were prepared to give their lives, why do it twice, once to win Dominion Status, and again to win independence? The Nehru report sinned against the self-respect

and dignity of India. He wanted a field, and no favour. Let all be free, observed the Sardar, to seek election by mixed electorates. He would not mind if the Sikhs then did not get a single seat. The Nehru report was open to objection, as it laid the foundation of communalism. Finally, the Sardar exhorted the people to give up intemperate habits and to adopt Swadeshi.

As a protest against this address certain nationalist Sikhs did not take any further part in the proceedings.

#### Discussion on Nehru Report.

Mr. Gyani Sher Singh moved a resolution objecting to communal representation in the Nehru Report, characterising as "unjust" the representation allotted to Sikhs, and demanding instead reservation of at least 30 per cent of the seats in the local legislature and the same proportion of representation from the Punjab to the Central Legislature of the country on a system of joint electorates and plural constituencies.

After Sardar Sant Singh of Lyallpur had seconded the resolution, Sardar Amar Singh Jhabal moved an amendment *inter alia* approving of the constitution drafted by the Nehru Committee, and appreciating abolition of reservation of seats in the Punjab, but urging the All-India Convention to effect the following modifications: (a) the goal to be complete independence, (b) reservation of seats to be abolished in all provinces as in the Punjab and Bengal, (c) the condition precedent to adult suffrage demanded by the Punjab Moslems be abandoned, (d) Moslem rights to reopen the question of joint electorates after ten years be not conceded. The speaker exhorted the Sikhs to stand on the popular side in the fight 'or freedom.

Mr. Harnam Singh contended that Swaraj should not be tantamount to Muslim Raj. Mr. Kabul Singh emphasised that the Nehru Report granted a boon to the peasants and workers by making provision for adult suffrage.

Mr. Buta Singh, Advocate, declared that the Sikhs did not want to wreck the Congress, but felt that the whole Nehru scheme was based on communal considerations, and not drafted from a purely nationalist standpoint.

Sardar Mangal Singh, a signatory to the Nehru Report, said that he saw Swaraj coming nearer and nearer every day, but to ensure it religious prejudice must go. He denied that the Sikhs' rights could be safeguarded by conceding reserved seats on a population basis in the Punjab, as it would only create mutual suspicion between the communities. Explaining his sitting in the All-Parties' Conference, he said he had urged that communal representation must disappear altogether or that the percentage should be thirty per cent. Even from the mere communal standpoint, he had said that the Sikhs would by capacity and worth win more seats than by reservation on a population basis.

Master Tara Singh did not want to break away from the Congress. The Congress should not ignore Sikhs. He was not for Moslem Raj and he was not for British Raj either but would, while working with the Congress, secure for the Sikhs their rights even if he had to die in his work in pursuance thereof.

The original resolution disapproving the Nehru Report and the ideal of Dominion Status and demanding 30 per cent representation for the Sikhs was carried by a large majority.

The Independence resolution as passed by the Subjects Committee was not put before the open session.

#### Conference Ends in Confusion.

The last resolution moved in the Sikh League declared that any Sikh who would remain a member of the Nehru Committee, would forfeit the confidence of the Sikhs unless he was nominated by the League.

Sirdar Tej Singh, who opposed the resolution, was shouted down. Sirdar Tej Singh left the hall and great confusion prevailed, when harsh words and challenges for a fight were exchanged.

The President failed to control the situation, and the Conference concluded amidst confusion.

# The Punjab Provincial Conference.

Amidst scenes of great enthusiasm the Punjab Provincial Political Conference met at Lyallpur on the 29TH SEPTEMBER 1928 at 9 A.M. under the presidentship of Lala Dunichand. A large number of delegates from different parts of the Punjab including quite a good number of lady delegates attended the Conference. The proceedings commenced with the singing of the Bandemataram song, the whole audience standing up while it was being sung.

After the Chairman, Reception Committee, had finished the welcome address, Dr. Satynpal formally proposed Lala Dunichand to the chair.

## The Presidential Address.

The President, in the course his address, said that India had got only a semblance of self-Government in lieu of her sacrifice in men and money in the Great War, whereas the victorious countries got almost everything they wanted. The so-called Reforms did not bring in any marked economic, educational or moral advance in India but the taxes and the cost of living had gone up in an appreciable degree. The value of the lands and houses has decreased, trade has gone down, income of the agriculturist has gone down and unemployment among the masses is daily increasing with the result that the condition of the masses is now worse than ever. But the expenditure on the Army and the Civil Service has multiplied to a ridiculous extent.

Freedom was the only remedy suggested by the President for the betterment of India. He cited the examples of U. S. A. which prospered as soon as they threw away the yoke of England and the countries like Canada, Australia and South Africa which are marching towards progress. "The real fact is that" said Lala Dunichand, "these self-governing countries have economic freedom and their wealth remains in the country itself. While so far as India is concerned, she has no economic freedom and at the same time a decent portion of her wealth is sent away to the country to which it is subject."

Lala Dunichand then exploded the theory that India being an Asiatic country and inhabited by different communities was not fit to govern herself. Japan, he said, had long ago shown that an Asiatic country could make progress as rapidly as any European country and Canada had exhibited how several communities and diverse people of different religious persuasion became one united people and proud citizens of one of the most progressive colonies of the world. Referring to the Morley-Minto Reforms and Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, the President observed that these half-hearted measures could not solve the problem and that there was no occasion for sending the Simon Commission because "the British people or Parliament and the Government of India know what they want to give and what the people of India sent on their part. And to settle this question it would have been better if a Round Table Conference had been called to settle the lines of reforms."

Referring to the report of the All-Parties' Conference, Lala Dunichand said that the Congress took up the challenge thrown out by Lord Birkenhead and prepared a constitution the major recommendations of which were acceptable to all.

The President regretted the hostile attitude of the Anglo-Indians and offered a friendly advice to them and the Civil Service not to oppose the Nehru report. He also thought that objections raised by a small group of Mahomedans were not tenable. He referred to some of them and showed how these could not be maintained, if carefully scrutinised.

Referring to the Sikhs he rejoiced that generally the inheritors of those who ruled the Punjab before the advent of the English are playing their part in a manner worthy of them.

The last objection raised by certain advanced Indians was that the present Nehru constitution was not good, because the time had advanced so much that we should have a constitution for independence only.



"Personally I quite sympathise with them. In fact, personally I am for a constitution providing for complete independence. But I confess that to our misfortune, all Indians at the present moment are not agreed to it. And we cannot succeed in our demand, if the constitution containing this demand is not backed by all parties as the Nehru Report is. Therefore, as a practical man, I would request my friends holding this opinion that for the present they should see their way of accepting this report till the test of their countrymen came up to their standard.

"I have now done with my brief general survey of the Simon Commission and the Nehru Report. Now it is your business to do your best in every possible way to boycott the Simon Commission and support the Nehru Report. There has already been formed an all-parties committee in the Punjab. Every one of you should not only become a member of this committee but also help this All-Parties Committee with men and money".

Referring to the so-called advantages of British rule the President said:—"It is an exploded theory. The real thing which we have to see is what our present condition is as compared with the other civilised countries, and as I have suggested above, our present condition is as bad as ever and does not compare favourably with that of the people of other self-governing countries. While under this foreign bureaucracy the agriculture of the country has fared adversely the non-agriculture pursuits such as trade and commerce have not in any way fared better, and the present system of Government, true to its traditions, has tried to thwart the trading and commercial classes similarly".

The President pointed out that "the drain of money from our country to England, the chief thing which has retarded and is still retarding the progress of India, is the excessive expenditure on the Army and the Civil Service. You are aware that heavy as that expenditure on the army already was in the pre-war days, it has nearly been doubled and now it absorbs nearly half the total revenue of India and only recently the salaries of the Civil services as a result of the Lee Commission report (notwithstanding the protest of the whole country) have also been doubled. And how powerless our Legislative Assembly was in the matter is well known to you all. Therefore until the people have power to reduce the enormous expenditure, it is difficult to make any progress in the country. I do not expect much from the Government, foreign as it is. Though I have asked for your earnest and whole-hearted support of the Nehru report, I must frankly confess that I do not expect Dominion Government within a short time, if the Government can help it".

Concluding his address Lala Dunichand said: "If we are going to get Swaraj or Self-Government, it will be with our exertions only. Therefore let us determine once and for all that in order to attain Swaraj we must sink all our difference, stand under the banner of the Congress and help it with all our heart and soul. For if I can give you any advice that consists only in these words, and they are always—self-knowledge, self-consciousness and self-dependence, if you can act upon these words, God will help you and bless your enterprise".

### Resolutions.

After the President had finished his address the Conference adjourned but met again in the afternoon when Dr. Satyapal moved a resolution appreciating the services of Sardar Gopal Singh, Propaganda Secretary of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee who had recently been convicted under section 124A to two years' rigorous imprisonment and a fine of thousand rupees, and criticising the judgment of the convicting magistrate.

After the resolution had been duly seconded and supported the Conference unanimously and enthusiastically passed it.

### The Bardoli Struggle.

Sardar Mangal Singh then moved a resolution congratulating Mr. Vallabhai Patel and his colleagues and co-workers. In course of a lengthy speech the mover recalled the history of the Bardoli struggle and maintained that it was Government who broke law in spirit though not in letter. Government, continued the speaker, was out to break the spirit of the people, but it was ultimately the Government that had to bend before the will of the people. The speaker reiterated Mr. Vallabhai's words that given intercommunal unity he would establish self-government in a fortnight. By allowing intercommunal dissensions to exist India was perpetuating her slavery.

The resolution was unanimously adopted by the conference.

### Independence.

Dr. Alam then moved that this Conference cordially welcomes the resolution of independence adopted by the Indian National Congress and is of opinion that there can be no real freedom for India till British connection is severed and India controls her economic,

military and foreign policy. In particular this Conference is of opinion that the British army of occupation in India must forthwith be withdrawn.

Dr. Alam moving the above resolution said that independence was worth striving for at all costs and no amount of sacrifice was too great for it. Continuing Dr. Alam said that the craving for freedom was like a mania which once it possesses a man make him run after it like a mad man. He was confident the British connection with India could not last long. The Lucknow Conference, continued Dr. Alam, had held out the olive branch to the British Government and the consequence of its refusal rested entirely with the British Government. The resolution was adopted by the conference.

#### Complete Boycott of Commission.

The Conference then unanimously adopted resolutions favouring complete boycott of the Simon Commission, calling upon the people of the Punjab to organise mass demonstrations on the occasion of the Commission's visit in the Punjab, strongly condemning the action of the Viceroy in nominating members from the Central Legislature to co-operate with the Commission and strongly condemning the action of the members of the Punjab Council Simon Committee.

#### The Nehru Report.

On the 30TH SEPTEMBER, the Conference reassembling Maulana Abdul Quadir moved that this conference congratulates Pandit Motilal Nehru and his colleagues on drafting the report and while adhering to the ideal of independence approves of and accepts the Lucknow All-Parties Conference decision and whole-heartedly supports the system of joint electorate. The mover explained the advantages of the Nehru scheme and maintained that the Nehru constitution offered the best solution for India's multifarious problems.

After about five hours' discussion the Conference adopted unanimously the resolution.

The Conference also adopted the following resolutions :—(1) Strongly protesting against the Government policy regarding the Martial Law prisoners and calling upon the Punjab people to start a vigorous agitation for their release. (2) Paying its reverent homage and hearty greeting to the numerous and gallant band of children of the province who lie in jail on this day for the crime of loving freedom and serving the mother-land and suggesting for the starting of a fund in their aid.

After the passage of some other resolutions and the president's concluding remarks the vote of thanks was proposed to the chair and the conference concluded.

## The U. P. Provincial Conference.

The U. P. Political Conference commenced sittings at Jhansi on the 27TH OCTOBER 1928 in a tastefully decorated pandal in front of the commanding hillock on which stands the historic Jhansi fort where Maharani Lakshmi Bai had fought many battles in the cause of the country in the early days of the East India Company. The delegates to the conference numbered about 350 and visitors turned up in very large numbers. It was past seven in the evening when the Conference opened proceedings with the singing of National songs.

#### Welcome Address.

Welcoming the delegates, Pandit Dhulekar recalled Maharani Lakshmi Bai's inimitable and undaunted courage and commended her imperishable love of freedom to the country.

Referring to the Simon Commission, the Chairman affirmed that the "alien, unwanted and uninvited Commission" had come with the avowed object of tightening the chains of bondage. The nation had wisely decided on complete boycott of the Commission. He believed the end of the communal fights was within sight, and that both Hindus and Moslems were getting ashamed of their past foolishness. He wanted the British people to understand that the Nehru Report was the last gesture made by India in the interests of peace and friendship, and that the British would be held responsible for the consequences which would follow its rejection.

Proceeding, Mr. Dhulekar congratulated the Bardoli Satyagrahis and attributed their success to khadi, which he said was but another name for organisation. Without an awakening of the villagers, there could be no real substantial success. Speaking of village industries, he urged the appointment of a committee to prepare a list of small industries fit to be introduced in the villages together with the practical means necessary

for such introduction. Concluding, the speaker advocated the continuance of the policy of capturing local bodies by Congressmen. He enumerated work of public utility including the introduction of primary education.

### Presidential Address.

Pandit Jawaharlal NEHRU was given a tremendous ovation as he proceeded to the rostrum to deliver his *extempore* presidential address in Hindustani. He declared that the cry of Independence was no new cry in India. From the day their country fell under alien rule, there had always been people who dreamt of Independence and worked for it. What was the great struggle of 1857, but a War of Independence consecrated by many gallant deeds and heroic sacrifices? Here in the city of Jhansi his mind dwelt lovingly on that lady who knowing no fear went out to struggle and die against overwhelming odds for the glory of India and her womanhood.

Proceeding, Pandit Jawaharlal said he believed that no nation under foreign rule could ever be at peace with its conqueror. India could not be at peace with England till she attained freedom. Freedom could not come by their becoming partners even if that were possible in that Imperialist concern which was called the British Empire. Imperialism and Freedom were as poles apart. The day England would shed Imperialism Indians would gladly co-operate with her, but there were no signs of it. England to-day was the arch-priest of Imperialism, and perhaps the worst offenders were those of her Labour Party who had a remarkable capacity for combining tall talk about freedom and self-determination with full-blooded Imperialism.

What manner of independence was that, which resulted in starvation and exploitation of millions? The problem before the country was therefore twofold. Firstly, they should chalk out an economic and social programme. Leadership and effective control of the movement would ultimately pass to those who were most exploited to-day, the masses. They would stumble, fall and make many mistakes, but they would have the driving force of economic necessity behind them, and that was bound to carry them to victory. Bereft of that driving force, their politics were bound to become, as they had indeed become, a jumble of resolutions, processions and shouting with no action behind them. Swaraj, asserted Pandit Jawaharlal, would not be attained by scoring lawyer's points or by forensic eloquence. The speaker reaffirmed that socialism must be their aim. He therefore recommended the appointment of a committee to draw up a programme.

Their social programme must lay down clearly that they could not tolerate the many disabilities from which the Depressed Classes suffered. Provision must be made for freeing the women-folk; and both legally and otherwise, they must have the same status as men. Such relics of barbarism as the purdah must of course go entirely.

Economic inequalities must give way to equitable distribution of wealth. Provision could not be made by keeping the economic and the social structure of to-day. To give wealth to the poor and the dispossessed, they must take from the rich. They must equalise distribution, and see that the incidence of taxation was such as to prevent both great wealth and great poverty. The burden of taxation on the rich must be increased, and decreased and even removed entirely from the poor. Abolition of landlordism would occupy a prominent place in their programme. Instead of landlordism, they should have small holdings ordinarily enough for a family to cultivate; but in order to prevent accumulations, they must prohibit all alienation of land and all transfers for debts. Pt. Jawaharlal suggested the grant of some compensation to the owners of big estates, but compensation should not certainly be given so as to make the receiver of it a wealthy man again. He also recommended that the very poor holders of land who could barely make a living out of it should be entirely exempted from taxation.

Another problem they had to face was the indebtedness of the peasantry. These debts must be annulled subject to partial compensation in cases of hardship. Taxation should be direct and steeply graduated, so as to fall in the main on larger incomes as far as possible. All indirect taxation should be abolished. Incidentally, he also suggested an inheritance tax or death duties.

Alluding to the workers, the President pointed out that the recent history of strikes, lock-outs and shootings showed that none could ignore industrial labour. Even the Government did not ignore them. The Government realised far more than any Indian leader, the potential strength of the workers; and so with frantic haste, the Government had sought to muzzle and tie up the trade unions. They had seen the attempts of the Government to crush their organisation and prevent organised action.

Referring to communal organisations, Pandit Jawaharlal opined that communalism would not go by pious resolutions and endless talk of unity. When examined it would be found that in essence it was the desire among the intellectuals for the loaves and

fishes of office. If, therefore, the attention of the masses was directed to the economic facts which mattered, they would automatically turn away from communalism and pseudo-religious mentality. As for communal leaders who advocated Independence, the strange mixture of communalism and Independence made the speaker doubt if the heads of those who combined both were sound. For, there was nothing in common between the two and they could not build up the noble edifice of a "free India" on the shifty and sandy foundations of communalism.

Concluding, Pandit Jawaharlal stated that they had now to devise sanctions. Those sanctions could only come from mass organisation and mass action. They might not adopt all the items of the non-co-operation programme of 1921, but they must adopt the spirit of it, leading eventually to non-payment of taxes or other forms of mass civil disobedience. Of course, they must have nothing to do with the Simon Commission, and there was no good evolving schemes of co-operation with England. He twitted His Highness the Maharaja of Bikaner for making the remark in a recent speech that in the event of a future war between India and England, His Highness would side with the latter. His Highness the Maharaja, declared the speaker, still lived mentally in the Middle Ages and thought of the Divine Rights of kings.

## Resolutions.

After the presidential address was over the Conference adjourned to re-assemble again on the next day, the 28TH OCTOBER, when it discussed resolutions recommended by the Subjects Committee.

### Memorial to Maharani Laxmibai of Jhansi.

On the motion of Principal Narendra Dev of the Benares National University, the Conference passed a resolution appointing a Committee to erect a memorial in honour of Maharani Laxmibai of Jhansi, who fearlessly sacrificed her life in the fight for Indian Independence during the Mutiny of 1857.

### National Independence.

Mr. Balakrishna Sharma then moved the following resolution :—"This Conference welcomes the resolution of the Madras Congress declaring the goal of the Indian people as Complete Independence. In the opinion of this Conference, there can be no real freedom for India so long as the connection with the British Empire is not severed."

Dr. Katju moved an amendment urging the deletion of the latter portion of the resolution, which declared in favour of secession from the British Empire.

His amendment however was rejected by an overwhelming majority, and the original resolution was passed with only two dissentients.

### Lucknow Decisions.

At the instance of Chaudhri Khalikuzzaman, the Conference welcomed the recommendations of the Lucknow All-Parties' Conference for the solution of communal difficulties, as in its opinion it could remove the difficulties.

The Conference on the motion of Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant passed a resolution, congratulating the Nehru Committee on their labours and patriotism, and stating that the Nehru Report was a great step towards political freedom.

Mr. Ramparshad moved a rider, to the effect, that the Conference should welcome only recommendations like those relating to Adult Franchise, the solution of the communal problem, distribution of provinces on linguistic basis, compulsory education, etc., which did not come into conflict with the Independence resolution.

The amendment was thrown out, only the mover voting for it.

Subject to its decision on Independence, the Conference subsequently adopted the Nehru Report. The Conference then adjourned.

### Boycott of Simon Commission.

On the 29TH OCTOBER the Conference urged effective boycott of the Simon Commission, characterising the members of the Central and Provincial subsidiary Committees as ill-wishers of the country. Resolutions were also passed recommending the uplift of the depressed classes, congratulating the Bardoli Satyagrahis on their successful "no-tax" campaign, and condemning the Government for passing "vindictive" sentences on the Kakori prisoners.

The Conference noted with deep concern the failure of crops in the Province, and appointed a Committee, under the chairmanship of Pandit Gobind Ballabh Pant, for organising relief work. Another Committee was appointed to draw up a programme of village re-organisation. The Conference then dispersed.

# The Delhi Provincial Conference.

The Delhi Provincial Political Conference opened at Meerut on the 13TH OCTOBER 1928 in a huge pandal which was filled up by delegates and visitors, the attendance exceeding 3,000. Prominent among those present were Dr. Ansari, Pandit Jawaharlal, Professor Jugal Kishore, Professor Ramamurti, Messrs, Kripalani, Yemin Khan, Mukhtar Singh, Vijayapal Singh, Moulana Zafar Ali, Shrimati Parvati Devi and Mr. Beharilal.

## Presidential Address.

Pandit Jawaharlal, in the course of an extempore presidential address in Hindustani, mainly dealt with the Nehru Report, and the decisions of the All-Parties' Conference. He had absolutely nothing to do with the Simon Commission. He had ceased to think of it, much less to talk about it. He divided the Nehru Report into three parts, i.e., communal, general and the controversy between Dominion Status and Independence.

Discussing the communal aspect of the Nehru Report, Pandit Jawaharlal asserted that the Report not only embodied a carefully thoughtout and worked-out scheme, but the decision incorporated the agreement of all the people concerned. The real trouble had been the question of Sind, majority reservation in the Punjab and Bengal, and joint electorates. All the three points were settled by agreements by the parties concerned. The Sind Agreement was signed not only by the Hindus and Moslems concerned, but also by Maulana Shankat Ali and Moulvi Daudi who were now most unaccountably trying to discredit it. Their memories must be short. The Punjab Agreement was similarly solved by unanimous agreements among the Punjab delegates, subject to a note by the Sikhs. Why people should carry on an agitation against it, passed his comprehension, but it was obvious that the general feeling in the country was unanimously in favour of the solution. He hoped the Conference would strongly approve of them and ask for its complete adoption by the country. Even more than the solutions, he had welcomed at Lucknow the new spirit of compromise of "give and take." People now realised that the good of the country was inextricably bound up with the good of the whole of the people. That spirit was a certain sign of better times.

Proceeding, Pandit Jawaharlal referred to the clause relating to fundamental rights guaranteeing living wage. He approved of it thoroughly, but liked to know how the Nehru Committee and the Conference proposed to give effect to it. Where would they get the vast funds necessary? They could get them from the richer classes who were in superfluity of good things in the world, but the report assured the latter of all rights in property and titles. It might be said that increased production would leave more money at the people's disposal, but under the present circumstances, that money would go to landlords and capitalists. The only possible solution was offered by socialism, i.e., equalisation as far as possible of income and of the means of production and distribution and control by the State. It followed that there must be no big zamindars, and that big factories must be owned by the State. That was the only way to ensure a living wage for all. If all vested interests were protected, it was impossible to provide living wages.

Adverting to the Dominion Status versus Independence controversy, the President remarked that the tendency of the Nehru Committee was to limit the liberty of action of those who stood for independence and to glorify the Nehru Report. Other developments also pointed painfully to a general withdrawal from the position of independence. He specially referred to a recent report that the members of the Congress Party in the Central Legislature were permitted to sign the Viceroy's book. One could see gradually that the spider's web of imperialism was catching even Congressmen. Freedom, declared Pandit Jawaharlal, was not going to be won by nice points made by lawyers. It was to be attained by developing the will for power. "We are up to-day against Imperialism. Does Dominion Status promise us relief from it? It is all well to say, by getting Dominion Status we shall change the composition of the British Empire and then imperialism will disappear or decrease. The British Commonwealth of nations is the strongest exponent of imperialism. We cannot demolish it under Dominion Status."

Pandit Jawaharlal objected also to asking for Dominion Status on the ground that they feared the consequences of Independence, which meant they were accepting Dominion Status under stress. He did not want India to accept anything under compulsion. The

right moment for accepting Dominion Status might come after Independence had been attained and India was free to choose what she liked best. Moreover, the scheme would not develop a desire for freedom and capacity for sacrifice, and more dangerous still it would make people imagine that no sanction was necessary for it.

Continuing, Pandit Jawaharlal said that the question of violence and non-violence had been debated in this country. From the religious point of view undoubtedly violence was a bad thing and the chief grievance of socialists against capitalists was that it developed wars. He continued, "We want a world as far as possible without wars and violence; but violence, though utterly bad, is preferable to slavery. If India is convinced she can become free through violence. She will undoubtedly have a right to indulge in it as other countries have done. Modern development of warfare had, however, made organised States terribly powerful. It was impossible to combat the Government by violence. In Europe, he said, the main methods of developing sanction and of seizing power were based not on violence but peaceful organisation of workers, peasants and others. That was the only way for India too. Essentially, it was non-co-operation although there was difference in details. With organised masses, tremendous pressure could be brought to bear and any Government might be compelled to give in. They had an instance of that at Bardoli, and the success there showed its efficiency. Such method employed on an All-India scale was bound to result in national victory. Concluding, Pandit Jawaharlal explained his Independence for India League. He hoped the League would meet in Delhi next month to determine its constitution.

### Resolutions.

After the presidential speech was over, on the motion of Pandit Jawaharlal, the Conference adopted a resolution deploring the death of Hakim Ajmal Khan and adjourned till the next day.

#### The Bardoli Struggle.

On the 14TH OCTOBER on the motion of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, President of the Conference, it was unanimously resolved to congratulate Mr. Vallabhai Patel and the Sayagnahis of Bardoli for the successful agitation against the enhancement of land-revenue.

The Conference also recorded its sense of deep pain at the attitude of the Government, in not commuting the sentences passed upon the Kakori prisoners and sympathised with the families of the victims. It was further resolved to open a branch of the Hindustani Sevadai in the province.

#### Commission Boycott.

Choudhri Mukhtar Singh moved a resolution urging complete boycott of the Simon Commission at every stage and in every form, calling on the Congress organisations of the province to organise mass demonstrations in other cities the Commission may visit and extensive propaganda among Indians of all shades of opinion so that they might have nothing to do with the Commission. The resolution which was supported by Pandit Gopinath Sinha was passed by the conference.

#### Independence the Goal.

Dr. Ansari then moved:—"This Conference cordially welcomes the resolution of Independence passed at the Madras Congress and is of opinion that there can be no real freedom for India till British connection is severed."

Mr. Vijayapal Singh, believed that even Dominion Status would be granted to Indians as a halfway house as a sequel to the activities of those who stood for independence. As to the Simon team, they should dismiss them from their minds and think that they were Commissioners born and dead in the third century. The resolution was unanimously passed.

#### Nehru Report and Communal Problem.

On the motion of Maulana Zafarali it was resolved to welcome the solution of communal problems approved by the All-Parties' Conference. Maulana Zafarali urged the delegates to stand by and work that solution. The resolution was adopted.

#### Safeguard to Backward Communities.

The Conference next appointed a committee consisting of Dr. Ansari, Messrs Joti Peshad and Baldeo Chobe to prepare suitable economic safeguards for the so-called depressed classes and other backward groups and communities to be embodied in the Nehru Report. The conference also recommended to the Provincial Congress Committee to take in its charge the organisation of peasants and workers and start among them vigorous propaganda

regarding political uplift and to formulate economic programme for their betterment. The conference then adjourned till the next day.

On the 15TH OCTOBER the resolution for a separate Province for Delhi with Ambala and Meerut Division districts was to come first but was not taken up. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru having authorised the Publicity Secretary to inform the press that the Subjects Committee had decided to refer the Delhi Province resolution to the provincial Congress Committee. This decision was arrived at to avoid opposition by the Meerut delegates. There was a keen canvassing on both sides.

The first resolution taken up was about the war-danger. The conference drew particular attention of the people to the war danger resolution of the Madras Congress and exhorted them to follow the lead given therein and declared that they will not permit themselves to be exploited by the British Government for the furtherance of imperialism.

The second resolution passed concerned the creation of a provincial political sufferers' fund. The conference then closed amidst shouts of "Bande-Mataram".

## The Bihar Provincial Conference.

The 17th Bihar Provincial Political Conference began its session at Patna on the 9TH DECEMBER 1928. Before the proceedings commenced the National Flag was hoisted by Mr. Dip Narayan Sinha, President, Bihar Congress Committee. The Conference was attended by a large number of delegates and visitors. Besides the Hon. Mr. Anugraha Narayan Sinha, President-elect of the Conference and Mr. Sachidananda Sinha, ex-Finance Member, Bihar Govt. and Chairman, Reception Committee, the audience included amongst others Babu Rajendra Prasad, Hon Mohendra Prasad and Mrs. Kamala Devi Chattopadhyaya.

Mr. Sachidananda SINHA, welcoming the delegates recollected his old association as ex-President of the Conference and emphasised the utility of such conferences. Speaking about the Simon Commission he said that they had already laid down a clear policy regarding the Commission and experience had shown that their attitude was perfectly right and circumstances necessitated further stiffening of their opposition to the Commission.

Dealing with the Nehru Report, Mr. Sinha said that it had already received very wide appreciation and support throughout this country and even Anglo-Indian papers had been forced to acknowledge that it marked an epoch in India's political progress and embodied a statesmanly scheme which could not be lightly ignored. The report has been subjected to attacks from numerous quarters, Anglo-Indians and also by a section of their Mahomedan fellow countrymen. But the important point to remember was that the report should be taken as a whole and not piecemeal. Considered as such it provided, in his opinion, a scheme of reforms and political progress which, if accepted, would go a long way to satisfy the legitimate aspirations of their people.

Referring to the supersession of the Gaya District Board he deplored the determined manner in which the Government had superseded the Board. It had produced Indian capacity and character in respect of the administration of their self-governing bodies evidently with a view to prove before those who were but too ready to believe such stories of their eternal unfitness for the exercise of even their elementary rights. He regarded the action of the Ministry of Local Self-Govt. as a very serious and most drastic step in all conscience. It was designed to cast a grave reflection on Indian capacity and character in matters of administration. He strongly resented the aspersion sought to be cast by the supersession of the Board on a publicist of the standing and character of the Hon Mr. Anugraha Narayan Sinha who worthily represented the province in the Council of State. The Ministry had no case on merit and the supersession could only be justly characterised as a high-handed abuse of power inspired

obviously by ulterior considerations. It rested with them to so mobilise the forces of public opinion to make a repetition of such improper conduct on the part of the Government impossible in future.

He then referred to the scheme relating to the prolongation of the life of the present Legislative Council till the end of 1931 which according to some newspapers outside the province had emanated from Sir Syed Fakhruddin, Education Minister of Bihar and who was said to have circularised it to the Ministers of other provinces. The reason of the Minister for this prolongation scheme, in his own words, were that "the public will be engaged in criticising the report of the Simon Commission and its recommendations and those who are oppositionists will take undue advantage and will canvass against those who have either supported the Commissioner or gave evidence before it." He asked them to second their views on this question from the public point of view.

In his presidential address the Hon Mr. Anugrah NARAYAN dealt with the various problems affecting the country and the province at the present moment. He traced the history of the non-co-operation movement and the subsequent phases of the national struggle for independence. He pointed out that their policy of resisting the bureaucracy in the Councils was a failure, at least in Bihar, where the Government by manoeuvring the votes commanded a standing majority. He said that he had already replied in detailing the resolution of the Government superseding the Gaya District Board on which he was Chairman and he was prepared to seek the verdict at the bar of public opinion. In one breath the Government praised the local bodies and in the other condemned them. That was a queer policy. He gave two main reasons for the supersession of the Gaya District Board. Sir Ganesh Dutta Singh, Minister for Local Self-Government, was prompted to bring about the supersession out of personal malice against him and the Congress Party to which he belonged and the Government were out to make a good case for the unfitness of Indians before the Simon Commission. He criticised the educational policy of the Government and pointed out that there was no extension in primary education and at the present slow rates of progress it would take many years to achieve a real extension in primary education. He exhorted the people to stiffen the boycott of the Simon Commission in view of Lala Lajpat Rai's death and the assault on Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. He said that the Nehru Report have given satisfaction to all. Concluding, he asked them to follow the constructive programme of khaddar and charka.

## The Andhra Provincial Conference.

The Andhra Provincial Conference commenced its sessions at Nandyal on Saturday, the 17TH NOVEMBER 1928 before a large and distinguished gathering of delegates and visitors. Before the Conference met the news of the death of Lala Lajpat Rai cast a gloom over the gathering that met. It was received at noon and it spread quickly in the delegates' camp, throwing them into great grief over the demise of this patriot of supreme sacrifice and service. After a brief consultation, the delegates assembled and an extraordinary session of the Andhra Provincial Conference was held at which glowing tributes were paid to the life and service of Lalaji.

In proposing Mr. C. Doraiswami Iyengar, President-elect of the Conference, to the Chair, Mr. G. Harisarvothama Rao, Chairman of the Reception Committee, reported the news and said that they were met there to record their sense of deep loss at the death of Lalaji from heart failure this morning at 7-30. Lalaji, he said, fought and suffered all his life for the freedom of the motherland and his life was one of sacrifice and service. His loss was irreparable and the void caused would be hard to fill.



Mr. Doraiswami Iyengar, the President, then moved the following resolution :

"This Conference records its deepest sorrow at the sudden death of Lala Lajpat Rai from heart failure, who had fought all his life for the freedom of the motherland and laid down his life in her service and that so soon after he was brutally and cowardly assaulted by the Police on his chest, when he was leading the procession of boycott against the Simon Commission.

"This Conference conveys its message of condolence to the members of the Lalaji's family and exhorts them to bear up with the irreparable loss caused not only to themselves but also to the whole nation in the sure hope that Swaraj for India is being built on the sacrifice of this great nation."

The resolution was carried, the gathering standing in silence.

The Conference adjourned for half an hour, after which it proceeded with the regular proceedings. National songs were sung and these were followed by the address of the Chairman of the Reception Committee, Mr. G. Harisarvathama Rao. The President, Mr. C. Doraiswami Iyengar then delivered his address which lasted for nearly an hour.

### The Presidential Address.

After tracing the current of politics in the country up to the last Madras Congress, the President adverted to the Nehru Constitution and said :—"I will draw your attention to the tangible scheme that has been laid before us by the Nehru Committee. The Nehru Committee was not an irresponsible and spasmodic combination of individuals at random but one which had all the authority with which the country can clothe it. The National Congress by its resolution issued a Commission, which, from the point of view of the Nation, is as sublime as the Royal Commission, engineered by British interests, is from Briton's point of view. They took note of the general desire of all the parties in the country to unite together in settling a Swaraj Constitution. The All-Parties Conference was successfully and promptly organised, and as a result of their deliberations and with fully discussed views of all the parties on the contention questions, we have on record now the report of the Nehru Eight which has attained the enviable reputation of having crystallised the multifarious viewpoints and having secured the greatest common measure of the country's demand for self-determination. The present controversy is more in the manner than in the substance of it.

Speaking on the importance of the Nehru Report and the Simon Commission the President said : "I am not afraid now that the Nehru Report will be used as a questionnaire by the Simon Commission and all attempts to discredit it will be made with the kind of evidence open or in camera prepared for presentation before the Simon Commission. For I feel that the Nehru Report can withstand any amount of attack from the feeble armoury of the Government of India. But what is essential is to arm the report with the necessary sanction for its enforcement. The special achievement of the Nehru Committee is that it has fairly well solved the communal controversy of the virulent type, that between the Hindus and the Moslems".

#### Indian States.

Characterising the problem of the Indian States as an understandable conundrum, the President said :—"The agitation of the Indian States cannot block the path of India's freedom and when that freedom becomes a settled fact the States will come to realise that they have much to gain by their constitutional connection with India's Commonwealth, rather than by the fanciful theories of Sir Leslie Scott, who is but a paid advocate of the rulers of the Indian States, and not a disinterested expounder of jurisprudence, when he postulates the theory of the Indian States with the King of England".

#### England's Trusteeship.

Adverting to the boycott of the Simon Commission, the President said :—"Let our peaceful and graceful boycott proceed with all vigour, and the Simon Commission will know when they will hold their conference in which way lies the peace and good Government of India. It will be no compliment to the great

lawyer if he does not know what weight should be attached to the kind of evidence he received as against the patent realities which he can take judicial notice of as his knowledge of the real Indian situation grows. The loud voice of the country cannot be drowned by the whispers in the Commission chambers. Let us take no heed of it and proceed in our path".

Concluding, the President said:—"Let the so-called trusteeship or the guardianship of the Britisher in India be ended, and the Commonwealth be first established. Let us unite and work towards that freedom by whatever name it may be called. Britain will be a very good friend when India ceases to be a servient tenement for its domination, and not till then. India will be really a independent member of the League of Nations only then and not till then".

### Resolutions.

After the presidential address was over, condolence resolutions were put from the Chair and carried, the whole house standing, touching the deaths of Hakim Ajmal Khan, Duggirala Gopalakrishnayya, Maganlal Gandhi and Gopa bandhu Das.

#### The Nehru Report.

Mr. A. Govindachari next moved:—

"This Conference supports the resolution recently passed at Delhi by the All-India Congress Committee on the Nehru report."

He said he whole-heartedly accepted the resolution of the All-India Congress Committee, which in his opinion in no way conveyed the meaning that it accepted the first principle of the Nehru report, namely, the Dominion Status of the Government for India. While the first clause of the resolution expressed adherence to the Congress goal of complete independence, in the third clause, it referred to the Nehru recommendations being a great step towards political advance. This meant not Dominion Status but the items mentioned in the second clause in the resolution, namely communal unity, distribution of provinces on a linguistic basis and universal franchise and this too generally without committing itself to any detail.

Mr. A. Kaleswara Rao supported the resolution. He said that the Delhi resolution was very plain and it did not give any room for doubts as to interpretation. Under the auspices of the Congress itself a united front was proposed to be presented to the British Government. The All-Parties' Conference was convened by the All-India Congress Committee under these circumstances, and a report acceptable to all parties was prepared. It was the duty of the Congress organisations to support that report and see that the constitution recommended therein was obtained either by a campaign of passive resistance or by devising other sanctions. As for Independence, it might be the ultimate goal, for which even a moderate like Gokhale had no objection, because as that great patriot had said, nobody could set any limitation to the aspirations of a great nation.

The resolution was then put and carried unanimously. The Conference then adjourned to meet again on the next day.

#### Discussion on Congress Creed.

On the 18TH NOVEMBER, the Conference re-assembling, Mr. A. Govindachari moved a resolution to recommend to the next Congress at Calcutta to amend Article I of the Indian National Congress so as to add after "Swaraj," the words, "that is, independence free from foreign control."

He said that this resolution was intended to clear up the position in respect of India's goal, as there was meant by Swaraj—complete national independence free from foreign control or Dominion status with British connection. Already the Congress had passed a resolution declaring its goal to be independence at Madras. Again, at the last meeting of the A. I. C. C., the meaning was made clear by stating that the Committee adhered to the goal of independence and that true freedom could not be got without a severance of the British connection. It was only consequential that there should be a change in the creed of the Congress so as to define the goal clearly to be Swaraj free from foreign control.

Mr. G. Harisarthama Rao, interrupting, rose to a point of order. He stated that as the Conference had passed already a resolution supporting the A. I. C. C. resolution at Delhi on the Nehru Report, it was inconsistent now to pass a resolution for the change of the Congress creed into one of complete independence free from foreign control.

The President then gave his ruling. He stated that if the mover thought that his resolution was only expressing what was recorded in yesterday's resolution on the A. I. C. C. resolution on the Nehru Report, the present resolution was unnecessary. If, on the other hand, as it was contended, it was inconsistent with yesterday's resolution, it was out of order. For either of these reasons, he would rule Mr. Govindachari's motion out of place.

Mr. K. Nageswara Rao next read a resolution that the Committee appointed at Bezvada to carry on the boycott propaganda against the Simon Commission, be requested to take steps to boycott the Commission. It was carried "nem con."

On the motion of Mr. T. Prakasam the Conference expressed sympathy with the sufferers in the recent floods in the Godavari District and urged that a remission in the tax was called for.

#### Re-settlement in Kistna and Godavari.

Mr. Prakasam then moved a resolution characterising the proposed resettlement rates in the Kistna and Godavari Districts, as unjust and illegal, and stating that the ryots in these Districts were already groaning under heavy taxation. The resolution also urged on the Government to cancel the proposed increase. The resolution was carried.

Mr. Prakasam moved another resolution condemning the action of the Government of India in interning the Maharaja of Nabah in Kodaikanal and expressing sympathy with the Maharaja. The resolution was carried.

Mr. K. Subba Rao moved to recommend the Calcutta Congress to omit the words "peaceful and legitimate" in the Congress creed which runs: "The goal of the Congress is the attainment of Swaraj by all peaceful and legitimate means." After some discussions the resolution was withdrawn and the Conference dispersed.

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## The All-India Youth Congress.

Impressive and solemn scense marked the opening of the 3rd session of the All-India Youth Congress which met at Desbandhunagar, Calcutta on the 25TH DECEMBER 1928, in the afternoon under the Presidentship of Mr. K. F. Nariman.

#### Welcome Address.

Sj. Subhas Chandra Bose, Chairman, Reception Committee, delivered the following welcome address:—

Members of the Republic of Youth:

On behalf of the Reception Committee of the 3rd Session of the All-India Youth Congress, I accord you a most hearty welcome on your visit to this city of ours. The fact that this year, the 3rd Session of the Congress is going to be held is an unmistakable indication of the growing vitality of the youth movement in this country. There is probably some apprehension that this year the proceedings of the All-India Youth Congress may be somewhat overshadowed by the deliberations of the Indian National Congress and of the All-Parties Convention. But nothing to my mind can detract from the intrinsic importance of a congregation like the Youth Congress. Without minimising in any way the importance of political problems in our life, I would maintain that the problems of youth are vital problems—they have an importance of their own and we

who are the members of the Republic of Youth, attach great value and significance to them. I have no doubt that the deliberations of this Congress will be carried on with a sense of seriousness commensurate with the responsibility which has been cast on our shoulders. I have no doubt that this Congress will give a definite lead to the youths of this country on some of the most vital problems of our present day life. I, therefore, consider it a privilege and an honour that I should be authorised by the Reception Committee to welcome you on such an important occasion.

### Renaissance of Youth.

If we cast our eyes beyond our frontiers and take a bird's-eye view of the march of world events, there is one outstanding phenomenon which greets us in every land and that is the renaissance of Youth. From North to South and from East to West, wherever we may happen to glance, the Youth Movement has become a reality. It is necessary for us to be clear in our own minds what the characteristics of the Youth Movement are, what are its main springs on the one side and its ultimate objective on the other.

Any association of youngmen or of young women does not deserve the designation of youth association. A social service league or a famine relief society is not necessarily a youth association. A youth association is characterised by a feeling of dissatisfaction with the present order of things, the desire for a better order accompanied by a vision of that order. Youth movements are not reformist in outlook but revolutionary. A feeling of restlessness—of impatience with the present order, must come into existence before any youth movement can start. Personally, I do not consider the youth movement of to-day to be a twentieth century phenomenon or an occidental phenomenon. This is true of every age and of every clime. From the time of Socrates and Buddha, men have been inspired by a vision of a better world and under that inspiration have endeavoured to reconstruct society. The youth movements of the modern age are characterised by a similar vision and a similar effort. Whether it is Bolshevism in Russia or Fascism in Italy or the Young Turk-movement in Turkey—whether it is a movement in China or in Persia or in Germany, everywhere you will find the same impulse, the same vision and the same objective. Wherever the older generation of leaders have failed, youth have become self-conscious and have taken upon themselves the responsibility of reconstructing society and of guiding it on towards a better and nobler state of existence.

Friends, let us now come nearer home. It is not only the youths of Germany, Russia, Italy and China who are roused. It is not only in medieval Persia and insignificant Afghanistan that the youths have bestirred themselves. Even in this land of lotus-eaters the awakening has come. I firmly believe that it is an awakening from within and not merely a ferment on the surface. The youths of India are no longer content with handing over all responsibility to their older leaders and sitting down with folded hands or following like dumb driven cattle. They have realised that it is for them to create a new India, free, great and powerful. They have accepted the responsibility; they have prepared themselves for the consequences and they are now busy schooling themselves for the great task that awaits them. At this critical juncture, it is the duty of well-wishers of India to speak out fearlessly what they think of the movement or movements going on to-day. With an intuitive insight the present day movement is to be analysed critically, what defects there are have to be ruthlessly exposed and the entire movement is to be guided along healthy and fruitful channels.

As I look around me to-day, I am struck by two movements or two schools of thought about which, however small and insignificant I may be, it is my duty to speak out openly and fearlessly. I am referring to the two schools of thought, which have their centres at Sabarmati and Pondicherry. I am not considering the fundamental philosophy underlying those two schools of thought. This is not the time for metaphysical speculation. I shall talk to you to-day as a pragmatist, as one who will judge the intrinsic value of a school of thought not from a metaphysical point of view, but from experience of its actual effects and consequences.

The actual effect of the propaganda carried on by the Sabarmati School of

thought is to create a feeling and an impression that modernism is bad, large scale production is an evil, wants should not be increased and the standard of living should not be raised, that we must endeavour to the best of our ability to go back to the days of the bullock-cart and that the soul is so important that physical culture and military training can well be ignored.

The actual effect of the propaganda carried on by the Pondicherry school of thought is to create a feeling and an impression that there is nothing higher or nobler than peaceful contemplation, that Yoga means Pranayama and Dhyana, that while action may be tolerated as good, this particular brand of Yoga is something higher and better. This propaganda has led many a man to forget that spiritual progress under the present day conditions is possible only by ceaseless and unselfish action, that the best way to conquer nature is to fight her and that it is weakness to seek refuge in contemplation when we are hemmed in on all sides by dangers and difficulties.

It is the passivism, not philosophic but actual, inculcated by these schools of thought against which I protest. In this holy land of ours, Ashramas are not new institutions and ascetics and yogis are not novel phenomena. They have held and they will continue to hold an honoured place in society. But it is not their lead that we shall have to follow if we are to create a new India at once free, happy and great.

#### India's Need.

Friends, you will pardon me if in a fit of outspokenness I have trod on your sentiments. As I have just said I do not for one moment consider the fundamental philosophy underlying the two schools of thought but the actual consequences from a pragmatic point of view. In India we want to-day a philosophy of activism. We must be inspired by robust optimism: We have to live in the present and to adapt ourselves to modern conditions. We can no longer live in an isolated corner of the world. When India is free, she will have to fight her modern enemies with modern methods, both in the economic and in the political spheres. The days of the bullock-cart are gone and are gone for ever. Free India must prepare herself for any eventuality as long as the whole world does not accept whole-heartedly the policy of disarmament.

I am not one of those who in their zeal for modernism forget the glories of the past. We must take our stand on our past. India has a culture of her own which she must continue to develop along her own distinctive channels. In philosophy, literature, art, science, we have some thing new to give to the world which the world eagerly awaits. In a word, we must arrive at a synthesis between our ancient culture and modern science. We are, of all people, most eminently fit for working out this synthesis. Some of our best thinkers and workers are already engaged in this important task. We must resist the cry of "Back to the Vedas" on the one side, and on the other the meaningless craze for fashion and change of modern Europe. It is difficult to restrict a living movement within proper bounds, but I believe that if the pioneers and the leaders of the movement are on the whole on the right track, things will take their proper shape in due time.

Friends, one word more and I have done. The present year is a landmark not only in the history of our political movement but also in the history of the Indian Youth Movement. I hope and pray that this session will give a bold and definite lead to the youths of this country. We are fortunate to-day in welcoming as our President, one, who needs no introduction to the youths of this country, I mean Mr. Nariman of Bombay. Mr. Nariman may be more intimately known, loved and respected by youths in Western India but it is also a fact that he is known, loved and respected by youths in other parts of the country as well. We have during the last few years followed his career and activity with the closest interest and I believe that it is a privilege for us to be able to welcome him into our midst. Under his able guidance and leadership, we shall have a most successful session and thereafter a useful and prosperous year.

On behalf of the Reception Committee, I once again accord you all a most hearty welcome.

## The Presidential Address.

Mr. Nariman in the course of his presidential address, referring to the Youth Movement, said :—

This is the first movement amongst the Youths of various provinces which has brought together in a spirit of true comradeship and companionship the students of various educational and other institutions, not only of the same city or town but of the same province and ultimately of the whole country. This assembly to-day is a self-evident proof of that fact that cannot be gainsaid. For want of a general organization and opportunity hitherto, for all these years, there was a feeling of aloofness and isolation amongst the students even of the same college or institution, although an Indian student is not of a secluded nature by temperament. The Youth Movement is the first organized effort to bring the student world together as one class, and such organisation not only fosters a spirit of harmony and universal brotherhood but also serves as a channel for ventilating their common grievances. What a wonderful and decisive effect such concerted and organised action has on the authorities is proved by the recent instance in the Bombay Presidency, when the Government was compelled to give up a proposal, on account of the Youth League's agitation, to enhance school and college fees.

This spirit of comradeship and fellowship amongst students and youths of different communities and sects engendered from early years, is bound to produce salutary effect on the large and grave communal problems that are so baneful to the public of our country to-day. Often when elders are wrangling through the press or platform and exhibiting and betraying narrow communal fanatic views, the Youths of all communities in their conclave are engaged in solving large national issues, and I feel confident that if this spirit of inter-communal good-will and harmony is encouraged through this organization the future generation will at least be free from communal canker that is rotting our public life to-day.

I look upon this huge pandal as a vast recruiting office, my valiant and brave friend Sjt. Subash Bose and his colleagues and co-workers as so many recruiting officers, and you my young friends, brother and sister delegates and visitors, as so many young applicants anxiously awaiting to be recruited and enlisted in the Army of Swaraj, not at the command of the King or constituted foreign authority like mercenaries, but at the command of your dear Motherland, your Country and the constituted National authority, a gallant band of patriotic volunteers.

It has been and it shall ever be our endeavour to see that the Youth Movement in any part of the country does not remain a mere deliberative body, its only function being to meet at stated intervals at fixed places and merely discussing problems and passing resolutions. That will only result in the addition of one more glorified debating society in the country which may undoubtedly add some more glamour and zest to the political life in the country but will not suffice to achieve the real object in view. The elders can afford to deliberate, discuss and pass resolutions and pile them up in files for the edification of future generation. It is the privilege, duty and responsibility of Youth to go further and take actual effective steps to give effect to the resolutions they have debated, discussed and passed. That is how the Youth Movement in Bombay has become a new dynamic force to be reckoned with in the political as well as social activities of that Presidency.

Another grave danger against which I wish you to be guarded, is the fact very often noticed in this land, as perhaps in all other countries, viz., that a movement newly started displays a good deal of enthusiasm, energy and spirit in the beginning, but in the course of a few years, that newly kindled enthusiasm and spirit dies out and lethargy creeps in and the movement loses all its life and force. I do hope that will not be the fate of this Youth Movement.

Indian Youths Awake !

Youth Movement all the world over is a new phase in the modern political, economic and social history of the world. In all countries, either Asiatic or

European, Youths have played and are still playing a most prominent part in the political, social or economic revolution that has brought about a regeneration or restoration of fallen Nations or oppressed countries and a brief survey of Youth activities in some countries would be instructive as well as inspiring to this newly awakened spirit of Youth in this country. The economic revival of Germany after the Great War was no doubt due to the strenuous efforts of the Youth. The political emancipation of Ireland was the result of concerted and well-equipped Youth organization of that country. In the Egyptian struggle for Independence, the Youths again are the standard-bearers of National Honour and National Freedom. The Fascist movement in Italy is but another place of universal Youth activity as the Young Turk and Afghan is rebelling against the old enervating customs and superstitions of their respective countries. But the most recent and perhaps the most inspiring of all examples is that of China, and the achievements of Young Nationalist China are one of the most wonderful political phenomena of modern times.

Thus, when the Youth of all civilised countries in the World is awakened and carrying on incessant struggle and rebellion against all the existing evils and stagnation, even when the Afghan Youth, who but till yesterday was considered as belonging to a semi-civilised and fanatic hill tribe, is up and has joined the general rank and file of Youth Reformers of the World, is it possible, is it conceivable that the Indian Youth alone should lag behind? Nay, that is not possible. The time has come, indeed it is long past, when the energetic, spirited, enthusiastic and patriotic Youth in India is also expected to awake and arise and shake off the paralysing effects of long lethargy and join his Youthful comrades in the World, to do his bit towards his dear Motherland and help and co-operate in reshaping his country and thus, in reconstructing the World.

To my mind, the necessity of such a Youth Movement in a country like India, suffering under a foreign domination for years is much greater than in those countries that have already achieved their freedom, and hence the grave responsibilities and greater duties are imposed on an Indian Youth than the Youth of any other country, and I feel confident that the Youth will most readily and willingly respond to this clarion call to duty and unflinchingly and ungrudgingly discharge his patriotic duty at the most critical juncture in the history of this unfortunate country.

Friends, I speak with confidence of the Indian Youth, because in my short experience as the President of the Bombay Presidency Youth League, I am proud to maintain that the Youth of this country is in no way inferior but in many respects superior to the Youth of any other country in the World. He has the same devotion to duty, undying patriotism and love for his country, courage, spirit of self-sacrifice, and above all, burning desire to be free—all virtuous traits and qualities that crowned the Youth activities of other countries with success. All that is needed is a proper, well disciplined and well regulated organization, a bold courageous and disinterested leadership, and what is most important, a change in the mental outlook and politically unhealthy atmosphere and surrounding, which serves as a retrograde drag, and prevents the normal development and progress. Therefore, the first function and duty of a Youth Movement in any country, and more particularly in India, is to remove all degenerating causes that are disastrous to the natural and healthy progress of juvenile spirit and mental development in proper directions.

Even under ordinary or favourable conditions, the vice imposition of a foreign domination particularly for years, is bound to have a most degenerating and fatal effect on the mental, physical, intellectual or normal development of a nation. But when to that enervating circumstances is added a pernicious and perverse system of education, deliberately introduced to emasculate and kill the manhood of a nation, the results are bound to be more disastrous and greater effort would be necessary to restore that nation to its original greatness and glory.

From the early days of the East India Company, as the ancient records prove, the educational policy of the Government was laid down not with a view to educate the people in the real sense of the word, i.e., to develop in proper direction their mental, intellectual and physical qualities so as to fit them for the duties and responsibilities of a patriot or citizen, but in the words of Lord Macaulay, "merely to train up young natives for employment in Government offices and administrative services," so that the majority of Indians never went beyond the stage of looking upon education as the avenue that leads to Government service or learn something in Universities in order to be able to earn something in life. That low conception unfortunately dominated and still dominates us to

a great extent. The other satanic step adopted by the Government is the introduction of the Arms Act, resulting in physical emasculation.

The ideal and aim of education in every civilised country in the World is two-fold. One is academical attainments with a view to equip one-self for the struggle, in other words as a means of livelihood, but the other and the higher ideal is to build up a real manly character, to develop his mental and physical qualities, to make him courageous, self-reliant and independent, and to fit him in every respect for the greater and higher responsibilities and duties of a citizen and patriot for his country, by acquainting him with the past glories and greatness of his motherland and the achievements of his great national heroes. But in this unfortunate land, the second and more important part of education is not only neglected, but positively discouraged. A little child in his primary school begins his scholastic career with silly lessons about British Kings and their kindness to India, the protection they afford, the happiness and security they confer on this country and what disasters would come to this country if that protection was withdrawn. The President then read one typical lesson from a primary vernacular text.

Referring to an incident in the Bombay Council, the President said that he was once told by the Minister that the lives of patriots form dangerous literature. The lives and teachings of Indian patriots and national heroes are dangerous literature for Indian students, but silly lives of stupid British Kings are useful knowledge that must be crammed by our Youth at the enormous sacrifice of time, labour and money.

That this policy of resisting all efforts to nationalise the education and develop a spirit of patriotism in the Youth is universally followed all over India, and is not confined to our Presidency alone, is further demonstrated by similar disgraceful attempt in Madras where by a Government Resolution such patriotic and national songs known as "Bharathi Songs" were proscribed and the proscription still continues inspite of a Resolution of the Madras Legislative Council demanding its cancellation, particularly from schools and colleges, lest the Youth be inspired with a love and devotion for the country and make an effort to redeem it from a foreign yoke. I suppose the Government would like your Youth to sing aloud "Rule Britannia, Britannia rules the waves," and such meaningless effusions, and then all the choras girls of the Empire including Mahajrajahs and Members of Government will join to sing the chorus.

But the most recent and the most courageous instance is the one in connection with the Victoria Jubilee Technical Institute in Bombay. As a part of training in the Textile Department, the students are asked to weave a portrait on cloth and these portraits are preserved in the College Exhibition. Under the directions of a European Principal, the students are required to weave the portraits of the Principal himself or European members of the Board of Management, or of persons of scientific distinction, such as Viceroy, Governors, Ministers, etc. By what process of reasoning these officials become persons of scientific distinction, it is difficult to understand. But last year a patriotic student desired to weave a portrait of Mahatma Gandhi, and when the Principal came to know of it, he at once issued an order prohibiting it and the Board of Management upheld that order. I want you, my young friends, to appreciate and understand the very grave implications contained in this recent instance.

Added to this anti-nationalist and anti-patriotic efforts to degenerate and denationalise our Youth, further mischief is done often by distortion of history, both Indian and English, so as to exaggerate the supposed dark sides in Indian character and magnify the imaginary virtues in British. The Black Hole of Calcutta is prominently chronicled in every edition of the Indian History, though subsequent investigations show the incident either a complete myth or half-truth, to create an impression on the Indian Youth that the Indians were cruel, treacherous and barbarous, and that they should not be trusted. But the blackest deed of Jhaffanwalla Bagh, exposing the butchery and brutality of a British General in more modern times has not yet found a place in even the latest edition of Indian History. I remember when at school, I was given a graphic description of a supposed wily and tricky Bengali Brahmin named Nandkumar who was supposed to have committed some fraud on the Company's officers. What could be the motive of introducing such trivial unimportant incident in History to be taught to our boys, except to impress upon them that Brahmins are dishonest and not to be trusted? But the worst exploits of the High European officials of the Development Department in Bombay, exposing a system of outrageous frauds to the extent of crores of rupees, will be quietly glossed over and every attempt will be made to hush up the shabby affair. Thus, throughout the course, if you make a careful survey, you will find a systematic effort to lower the Indian character, Indian achievements, and to glorify and extol the British as the gallant saviours of the land and its people.

To counteract this move on the part of educational authorities, the Bombay Youth



League propose to start study classes to be run on purely National lines where all literature and work exposing the dark side of the British Empire and the bright side of India alone will be permitted and students will be given facilities and opportunities to study the life work and speeches of illustrious National workers.

What other country but India could tolerate and meekly submit to face national outrages as are committed on our National Leaders like Lala Lajpat Rai or Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru by police hooligans and criminals in this country? The warlike Province of Punjab, inhabited by the most martial race in the country, cannot enforce even a moderate and just demand for an inquiry into the death of its most beloved and revered leader and in that farcical and fraudulent body, wrongly described as the Legislative Council, only 22 male members voted for that Resolution, while the rest of them, impotent, made an exhibition of their effeminacy and impotency by not possessing sufficient courage even to vote for such a modest demand.

My young friends, I want you to appreciate that you are the present watch-dogs and the future owners of this ancient and most valuable heritage. You are the present trustees and as such, it is your duty to preserve and maintain intact the National Honour and self-respect of this ancient Land and its equally ancient peoples.

Do not for a minute believe, because you have the misfortune to be ruled by foreigners, that you and your country are in any way inferior to your Rulers, and that any other country can claim to be your superior. Even to-day, after the degenerating influence of 150 years of foreign rule, your country can boast of greater personalities and men in various spheres of life than the so-called Mother country of England or any other European country. From amongst the whole nation of shopkeepers I will challenge them to produce an individual who can be placed on the same high moral pedestal as Mahatma Gandhi. In the sphere of modern science, your Presidency ought to be proud of that great Scientist Sir Jagadish Bose who is revolutionising the Scientist World. In sublime poetry, literature and philosophy, whom will they point out from the whole of England to match with Dr. Rabindranath Tagore, worshipped and adored by all lovers of art and literature in every part of the World? What statesman, scholar or patriot will they find in England to equal Lokmanya Tilak? MacDonald, Baldwin, Joynton Hicks or a Birkhead is their limit, mere mediocres, who but for opportunities afforded to a ruling race might not have risen higher than ordinary traders or head clerks.

My young friends, I do not desire to bring these facts home to you simply with a view to make you swelled-headed, arrogant like our British opponents. I only desire to kindle in your mind a legitimate national pride, national awakening and an intense desire to be free. Once that feeling is awakened in you, it will not be necessary to carry on any more educative propaganda such as Conferences and Congresses, but that awakened spirit will itself lead you to discharge your duties as a patriot and as a citizen, creating a feeling of self-confidence and self-reliance, making you resent all national insults and humiliations and will make you rebel with courage against all evil, social and economic.

The Youth of a country is not only a present trustee and future owner of the country but the Youth mentality is the very foundation of nationalism and patriotism of any nation, and the solidarity and weakness of that political structure or edifice raised will depend upon the soundness or otherwise of that foundation.

With that changed mentality and outlook, the political struggle in this country will be on a surer and sounder foundation, and the political blacklegs and traitors will have no place in the public life of the country. When that situation arises, I feel certain that a silent and bloodless evolution, almost unnoticed, will work out the political salvation of the country.

But, my young friends, side by side with the mental and physical process of development it is necessary that you should also be engaged in some useful constructive work, and I may assure you that your unfortunate country affords ample opportunities and vast field for much service and sacrifice. In your days of happiness and comfort, in your hour of joy and triumph, think of the suffering humanity and extend a helping hand to millions of your countrymen rotting in thousand of villages, steeped in poverty and ignorance, denied both the light of God and light of Learning.

That the Youths in India possess the same potentialities to fulfil the same great mission for their country, though perhaps by a different method, is amply demonstrated by the recent Bardoli struggle. The triumph of Bardoli was mainly, if not entirely, due to the courageous Band of Youth Volunteers from various "Ashrams" and National Institutions of Gujerat. This self-sacrificing and devoted band of youthful workers formed the well-disciplined and well-equipped army of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. They were the back-bone of the whole struggle, and with remarkable courage, fearless independence, readiness and willingness to suffer and sacrifice and a divine devotion to duty.

this gallant band of Indian Youths battled the mighty power of the Indian Empire and instilled similar courage and spirit of Independence in the rustic peasants of Bardoli and ultimately led them to triumphant success. These courageous youths from various Swaraj Ashrams were not perhaps brilliant University scholars in the modern sense of the term. Neither did they appear quite polished and up-to-date University "boys," fastidious and fashionable. Quite simple in their habits, simpler in their mode of lives, actually leading the life of a villager, but at a moment of supreme crises, they displayed a mentality and character, and power of resistance that won for them the admiration and applause of the whole country.

As a course of training, some of the members of the Bombay Youth League, both male and female, were sent to Bardoli Ashram, and a few days' contact with their comrades, exerted an enormous influence over them, so that on their return these Youths were entirely different individuals, discarding their fashionable attire and all their pleasure resorts like clubs and cinemas. They were burning with a desire to render some service to the unfortunate and oppressed peasants of Bardoli, and in response to a call from the Sardar, within half an hour about 15 young volunteers of both sexes started for Surat, ready to court arrest and jail.

The principal aim and object of the Youth Movement in the country should be to create a future generation of citizens who would imbibe the beauties of culture, both Eastern and Western, without emasculating or extinguishing their real Indian Manhood, and mentally martial spirit and character, and concerted efforts should be made, as it were, to 'Bardolise' the whole country by starting numerous Swaraj Ashrams in various districts all over the country. These 'Swaraj' Ashrams like the 'Al-Azhara' in Egypt and Gaelic Leagues in Ireland should be the recruiting camps to enlist and prepare an army of National Volunteers ready for action at time of National crisis. Bardoli has given the lead and shown the importance of these institutions. Responding to the clarion call of duty from that trusted Sardar Vallabhbhai, hundreds of Youths from various Ashrams flocked to Bardoli and placed themselves entirely under his command. Similarly, on an occasion of greater national crisis these 'Ashrams' will supply thousands of Volunteers for National service. In the meantime, these institutions can train up the Youths of the country, so as to kindle a National Pride in the rising generation, to make them extremely sensitive of National Honour and resent and resist all efforts to humiliate or insult our country or Nation, to create a confidence in self, making them self-reliant, self-sacrificing and courageous, and all that resulting in a grim determination in youthful minds to gain freedom for this country, and a firm resolve that though by a tragic accident they are born as slaves, they shall not die as slaves. "Bande Mataram".

### Resolutions.

On the next day, the 26TH DECEMBER, the Congress re-assembled to pass resolutions. The first resolution condoned the sad and untimely death of Lala Lajpat Rai under tragic circumstances and expressing warm appreciation of manifold services of Lalaji. Resolutions were also passed condoling the death of Pandit Gopabandhu Das and Dr. K. B. Shastri.

On a motion of B. B. Raja from Madras the Congress adopted a resolution by overwhelming majority declaring that complete independence and not dominion status should be the immediate objective of India and called upon the Youths of the country to attain that by all possible means.

By another resolution the Congress recorded its fraternal greetings to the Youths and Youth Organisations of the world. Mr. U. T. Kullivann of Purich who was on a visit to India supporting the resolution said that the world was vibrating with new life, new enthusiasm and spirit.

Mr. Mehralli of Bombay moved a resolution calling upon the Youth of India to combat the forces of communalism and capitalism by all means available to them as they were detrimental to the best interest of the nation. The Congress called upon the youth of the country to take up the vow of using khaddar and encourage swadeshi and as a matter of retaliation against exploitation of India by Britain the Congress urged the Youth to make effective boycott of British goods.

By another resolution the Youths of the country were called upon to keep up and stiffen the boycott of the Simon Commission. The Congress emphatically condemned the recent cowardly assaults by police in various parts of the country and called upon Young India to take up the new challenge of British Imperialism and to create the atmosphere in the country in which responsive violence should not be deprecated. The Congress then concluded its session.

# The Socialist Youth Congress.

The first All-India Socialistic Youth Congress commenced its sitting at the Rammohan Library Ha I, Calcutta, on Thursday the 27TH DECEMBER 1928 under the presidency of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. The proceedings commenced with a song specially composed for the occasion sung by a member of the Congress.

## Chairman's Address.

Dr. Bhupendranath Dutt, Chairman of the Reception Committee, in welcoming the president and the delegates delivered a lengthy address outlining the programme of work for the socialist youths of India. In the course of his speech Dr. Dutt said :—

With the help of new world-views and the application of new ideologies we can equip ourselves in the task of reconstructing the society. The duty of the youth is to help in reconstructing the Indian society. For this reason, the radical-minded youth of India must prepare themselves intellectually to perform this task.

The thing wanted to-day is to knit a band of socialistic-minded youths who will give expressions of their new world-views. It is the duty of the radical-minded youth to preach the falsity of the present day political and social philosophies, to expose the exploitation that is going on in the name of politics and religion. For this reason, they must study Marxism and other social and economically revolutionary philosophies, and to try to apply those principles in the conditions of his own country. The youth must be a rationalist first and should apply rationalism in his life's action.

It is the duty of the youth with Marxist views to give a socio-economic analysis of the situation, to uplift the masses and to make them class-conscious, to unite the different communities with an economic programme and to preach the gospel of social and economic equality, and to have an international outlook and to take part in world-currents of thought and to work for an all-round freedom of India. Finally, to create the proletariate culture based on the psychology and interest of the masses which will unite the Indian peoples into a homogeneous one.

They should organise study-circles, form clubs, and start "socialist youth leagues" all over the country, will go amongst the masses, will educate and organise them on vocational basis, will preach the gospel of social and economic equality. Finally when they get strong they must have Marxist movement of their own. While working, they must remember the saying of Swami Vivekananda that "The only hope of India is from the masses. The upper classes are physically and morally dead."

The radical-minded youth is the salt of India and it is in their hands to determine the destiny of their country. May they get strength and moral courage enough to live up to their conscience and principles.

## Pandit Jawaharlal's Address.

Pandit Jawaharlal rising to speak received a great ovation. He said that socialism was a very intricate subject, although the present cry for socialism was prevalent both amongst the intellectuals and the masses. They should explain the meaning of socialism to the masses and prepare the country to chalk out a plan of work. Socialism could be found in politics, religion and other spheres of activities. He had come there not to give them a learned discourse on socialistic doctrines, but to give them his good wishes as he knew very little of the subject. He felt however that only by true socialism was there any chance for the independence of the country (applause). Socialism was not a mere war cry, but it was a thing to be learned, studied and practised.

Pt. Nehru then referred to the ideas embodied in the speech of the Chairman of the Reception Committee and asked the audience to examine those ideas carefully and chalk out a programme of work based on those ideas. He agreed with the Chairman in his suggestion about the formation of 'study circles' and advised the audience to meet and discuss in those circles and find out the real truth in socialism. It was incumbent therefore on the socialists to find out the truth in socialism and when they had succeeded in doing that they would secure a proper place in the country as socialists.

There were opinions, oppositions and suppositions in every Congress and Conference and congregation in the country and it was a good sign for the country which was proceeding to search for truth in its attainment of their goal. Socialism could not b

attained by excitement and enthusiasm but by serious and thoughtful study of all concomitant circumstances. If they were convinced that by socialism they would attain salvation, he asked them to preach it before the country. If they wanted socialism to grow in the country, they should prepare a band of militant groups to carry out their ideas. Socialistic fights in the country was going to be a stiff fight, but they would have to fight against a number of prejudices courageously.

To-day the whole country was thinking seriously of the question of communalism. Hindus, Christians, Jains and Musalmans were expressing their respective views. If they took up this particular work at the present moment he thought that they could remove this communal spirit by socialistic ideas.

India, he concluded, was a tremendous country which comprised various provincial groups with different ideas. As a socialist they could work for the unification of different groups in the provinces. If they could develop this idea they could attain salvation and international brotherhood would come into existence.

## Resolutions.

The following resolutions were moved and carried by the Congress:—

(1) This Congress emphatically condemns the shooting affairs at Bamungacher, Bombay, Bauria, and other places and records its heartfelt condolence for the sad death of the comrades who fell victims to those shooting affairs.

(2) This All-India Congress of Socialist Youths condemns scathingly the Trades Dispute Bill and Public Safety Bill which are designed by the Government in 'alliance with reactionary capitalists and landlords of India to stifle the rapidly developing workers' and peasants' movements in the country. This Congress would support the organisation of country-wide agitation and mass action to checkmate the sinister plan of the Government and employers.

(3) In the opinion of this Congress complete Independence and not Dominion Status is the immediate political objective of India not as an ideal but as the 'necessary preliminary to a communistic society and rejects altogether the Nehru Committee Report for the following among other principles, viz:—

That it allows the bourgeoisie to compromise with the British Imperialists by establishing the so-called Dominion Status which involves the safeguard of the vested interests, landowning, feudal and capitalist, and sacrifice the interests of the masses.

That by recognising the titles of Princes it proposes to perpetuate tyrannical and undemocratic system of Government entailing unchecked exploitation of the masses which exists in the Native States.

That it safeguards and acquiesces in the exploitation of human and material resources of India by foreign capital.

That it guarantees and allows enjoyment of all titles to private and personal property acquired by questionable means which perpetuate the exploitation of the masses.

That it guarantees payment of all foreign state debts.

That it proposes to place the armed forces of the country under the control of a Committee which will at first consist partly of British Officers thus depriving the people of their inherent right of self-defence.

And that it proposes to give executive powers and the power of veto to the Governor-General and Governors nominated by the King thus depriving the Indian people of their sovereign rights.

(4) This Congress is of opinion that considering the present social, political and economic conditions of the country communism is the only way of realising complete social, political and economic freedom with all their implications and it therefore resolves that immediate steps should be taken to concentrate all available power, physical, moral and intellectual into the hands of real sincere communists so that in a crisis the transformation from the present capitalistic to a communistic society can be easy and complete.

(5) Resolved that an All-India Socialist Youth League be formed with the object of propagating Marxist world views in order to form a new orientation of national outlook. In order to organise the youth of India for training them to work among the masses, League research centres for studying the conditions of the masses be formed in areas in which capitalistic exploitation of field and factory labour is rampant and reports be corrected from time to time by the League for adopting needful methods to combat such exploitation.

For the proper training of such youths study circles be opened in proper places in order that the youths may equip themselves with Marxist ideologies.

After their proper training the Socialist Youths should go amongst the masses for

organising them on class-conscious and class-struggle basis, and for that purpose propaganda boards should be formed wherever necessary and to facilitate such propaganda a socialist journal as the organ of the League be started.

(6.) That this Socialist Youth Congress resolves that the All-India Socialist Youth League will work in co-operation with and be organizationally connected with other Socialistic Youth organisations outside India to carry on a united world struggle against international imperialism and capitalism for establishing a communistic world society.

(7.) This Congress condemns the high-handed action of the Punjab Government by arresting and torturing Lala Kidarnath, President, Punjab Provincial Navajivan Bharat Sabha, M. Ahmeddin, Secretary and others in connection with the Saundher's shooting.

(8.) In the opinion of this Congress all education should be free and in case of primary education should also be compulsory.

(9.) This Congress of Socialistic Youths of India resolves that it is the inherent and inalienable right of Labour to organise itself for its own betterment and progress and it is most inhuman and criminal on the part of employers or their agents to interfere in such organisations in any manner or form.

(10.) This Congress of the Socialistic Youths of India is of opinion that the dictatorship of the proletariat as the vanguard of all the exploited and oppressed elements of Indian society including the peasant masses should be a necessary stage in the country for the establishment of a communist society and as such this Congress stands for complete economic, social and political equality of the Indian people and emancipation of the masses from the thrall of their common enemy, the Indian bourgeoisie and British Imperialists. In order to achieve that end a revolutionary spirit must be instilled in the youth to do away with communalism and with what is old, rotten and dogmatic.

(11.) This Congress of the Socialist Youths of India strongly condemns the existing Arms Act and urges upon the Socialist Youth of India to launch a strong campaign for its withdrawal.

A select committee was next formed to draft the constitution of the All-India Socialist Youth Congress after which in concluding the session the President delivered a very vigorous and lucid address, in course of which he said :

Very few in India have heard of socialistic doctrines ; when we speak of socialism our leaders are surprised. It is essential that the principles of socialism should be studied with care and thorough attention, all the implications of socialism should be fully grasped. The masses of India are exploited not only by the Government but by the bourgeoisie also. It is imperative that everyone should have an opportunity of enjoying the amenities of life. The workers should combine against the Government and the employers in order to protect themselves from the unbearable repression which they have to face.

The poor have several faults of their own, but they are but victims of circumstances, they have very few amenities of life and no wonder they are not quite excellent in character. But undoubtedly if they have proper opportunities, they will become as fine a body of men as can be found anywhere. It is necessary that the people should enjoy equally all that the country yields. The speaker vividly described the miseries of the poor and condemned the sin of being well-placed. If we are not prepared to suffer with others, if we do not feel that all is not well with the country, if we do not share all we have got with others, we are not honest to ourselves. It is essential and indispensable that the people should become familiar with the principles of socialism. If we help the people, they will offer sincere and active sympathy in the struggle for freedom.

The President enlived the religion of humanity in which every human being is recognised as a human being, in which every man is recognised as a man. If we are determined to achieve social and political freedom we should all work for it.

## The Hindusthan Sevadal Conference.

A large number of delegates and visitors assembled in Deshbandhu Nagar, Calcutta on Sunday the 30TH DECEMBER 1928 in the morning when the members of the Hindusthan Sevadal held their conference under the presidency of Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose. Prof. Nripendra Chandra BANERJEE, Chairman of the Reception Committee, in welcoming the president, delegates and the visitors delivered the following address :—

Friends, India is now out on the high-roads of adventure in quest of full-fledged national independence. I will not enter into any disquisitions here about the learned fog that shrouds the constitutional issues of Dominion Status vs. Independence. One thing is clear, Dominion Status is internal autonomy within the British Imperialistic ring and Independence for India is autonomy in all branches of national well-being and security outside British control and suzerainty. I stand for the latter, though I have no quarrel with those who strive for a nearer and more immediate goal. Time alone can show whether even Dominion Status for India can be attained without the creation of irresistible sanctions. These sanctions are to be hammered out of the smithy of the National will on the anvil of disciplined sacrifice and suffering devoted to the service of the dumb millions, down-trodden and exploited by certain sections of our own countrymen whose power and privilege are bound up with the continuance of the alien domination. The mandate given by the All-Parties' Convention and that given by the National Congress have to be enforced—and the only way they may be enforced is by the creation of a permanent All-India corps of National Volunteers, auxiliary to and controlled by the National Congress. Every member of this corps, officer or private, will have to take pledge of loyalty to the Congress and accept its creed and ideals and push on the programme of work which the Congress may adopt from time to time. The organisation will practically be a federal one, giving great latitude to the Provinces: it is to be a fighting organisation, but not equipped with powder and shot. I am not quite sure in my own mind whether the organisation will be absolutely non-violent in thought and word; but so far as I can visualise the near future, it is bound to be absolutely non-violent in deed, prepared to face lathi, baton and even machine-gun charges from hostile organisations based on militarism; ready to die, but not anxious to answer charge with charge, certainly not eager to kill; for dying for a great cause is certainly more romantic and adventurous than killing which is a rather brutal business.

I trust every member of such a corps will educate himself in the principles of first-aid and rural sanitation and actively take up the work of removing illiteracy and social wrong and economic inequality. I care not so much about the 'isms' to which they may swear allegiance as about the moral and political etiquette of open-mindedness and honest courage and chivalric conduct to which they must conform. The time has certainly come when the resources of the Congress and of the Youth and Volunteer movements have to be consolidated and pooled for the cause of Indian Freedom, than which no cause can be dearer and certainly none more sacred to all live and healthy-minded men and women in India. I am absolutely sure in my own mind that this consolidation will be a very near event and that it will overcome all obstacles set in its path and survive repression and calumny and shoot forth into fire and flame. Panic-mongers need not take alarm; grass-hoppers in the fern need not buzz; the alien conqueror need not get worried. We are not going to emulate Sir Edward Carson's feats in Ulster, nor going to turn out another band of Indian 'Black-shirts', nor indulging in the humorous amenities of the Ku-Klux clan. We shall not kill or maim our adversaries, but ours shall be the nobler, the more risky paths of passive suffering linked to active service and propaganda. The impulses and instincts of fellowship and service directed and regulated shall lead our volunteers on to the open road of peaceful resistance to the forces of Evil wherever and however massed and concentrated.

Our flag shall be the tri-colour Swaraj flag of the Indian National Congress in whose service we shall live and die.

### President's Speech.

The President, Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose then rose amid cheers and delivered the following address:

Friends: In a Conference of this kind a long speech would be not only out of place but also uncalled for. In this All-India Volunteer Conference we have met primarily for the purpose of exchanging greetings, comparing notes and making a solemn resolution for another year's hard work. Our day-to-day experience and the testimony of histories of other nations tell us how great is the need for a Volunteer organization. In a dependent country like ours, discipline is what we want most of all if we are to achieve anything great. Along with discipline, we have to inculcate virtues like fearlessness, fortitude, selfishness, esprit d'corps, etc. All these virtues have to be instilled into our hearts through our Volunteer organizations. We have neglected our Volunteer organizations long enough and we can no longer afford to lose a single day more. I am happy to find—as I look around me—that in several parts of India splendid volunteer organizations have come into existence. But other parts unfortunately remain unorganised. In some provinces like Bengal, Volunteer organizations have drawn upon themselves the

wrath of the bureaucracy and for that reason have not been able to expand as satisfactorily as we would like them to. I therefore think that at this juncture an effort should be made simultaneously all over India to strengthen the Volunteer organizations. In every country under the sun, national awakening has been heralded by Volunteer organization. India can be no exception to this rule. Whether we shall succeed in winning our freedom or not, depends to a large extent on our Volunteer organizations.

The task of the volunteer is a most difficult one. If he wants to win the approbation of his conscience and the love and admiration of his countrymen, he will have to inculcate several virtues. He will have to be bold, unselfish, self-restrained, disciplined, devoted to duty and humble in spirit. It is not easy to find a combination so rare, without proper training and schooling. But it is certain that these are virtues which can be acquired by training and discipline and once these virtues are acquired, the whole country will feel proud of our volunteers as other nations feel proud of their national armies.

The leaders of the Volunteer movement and the officers of the Volunteer organizations have a great responsibility. They will have to set an example to the rank and file. On their character and on their training will depend the future of our volunteers. I have faith in my countrymen and I may say, infinite faith in the young generation of India. They are growing on the right lines and are fast developing character which we lack so much. I am sure that they will be able to face with heroism and courage all the ordeals in our national life.

There is one other matter to which I shall refer before I close. The name given to this organization, viz, "Hindusthan Sevalal" is one which does not inspire me. This is not only my personal view but the general view of Volunteers in this province. A Volunteer organization must have a flag and a name which will appeal straight to the hearts of all. I earnestly beg of you to consider whether or not you should have a new name for the All-India Corps. Following the example of armies in all lands, under an All-India Corps bearing one name, provincial organizations may have separate names—if they so desire and it will certainly be open to any provincial organization to retain the old name—"Hindusthan Sevalal," to denote the provincial Volunteer organization.

One of the most hopeful features of the times is the rapid expansion of the youth movement and physical culture movement all over the country. There must be a co-ordination between these two movements on the one side and the Volunteer movement on the other. Youths must be drilled, trained and disciplined as volunteers. Then alone can we hope to rear up a new generation of men who will win freedom for India and have the strength to retain it.

Friends, the mission of the volunteer is one of the noblest in life. But unfortunately he does not at present enjoy the love and esteem to which he is in my opinion entitled. We are all Volunteers in the nation's cause. Let us resolve to live a life which will command the love and admiration of our countrymen. I believe that if only we make the resolution, the day will soon come when our countrymen will have reason to feel proud of our volunteers. Personally I have no higher ambition than to be an ideal Volunteer in our country's cause. May our Volunteer organizations continue to thrive and expand from day to day and may their progress herald the dawn of a free India. "Bande-Mataram".

### Resolutions.

After the presidential address was over Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru moved a resolution urging the members to affiliate the Seva Dal to the League against Imperialism and suggested that members be elected to represent the Seva Dal at the Conference which would be held in Paris.

Mr. Purushottam Ray then moved a resolution urging the members of the Seva Dal to make arrangements to hoist the national flag at every place in the country at the end of every month and sing "Bande-Mataram" and send the report to the All-India Committee of the Seva Dal.

Other resolutions urging on the formation of the constitutions of the Seva Dal organisation were also adopted by the Conference which then concluded its sitting with a vote of thanks to the Chair.

# The Bengal Students' Conference

The All-Bengal Students' Conference was held in the Shradhananda Park, Calcutta on the 22ND SEPTEMBER 1928 in the afternoon under the presidency of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Dr. URQUHART, Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University, opening the conference, declared that no university should stifle discussion of public affairs by students. He thought it his duty as head of the University to give a push to the students' barque, and hoped that in framing their business for the conference they would be loyal to the spirit of the university. He warned them, however, against rushing to action. Preparation for their work in the maturer years would make it possible for them to discover modes unknown to their elders.

Mr. Promode Kumar GHOSAL, a student who had to leave the Presidency College in connection with the last hartal disturbances, as Chairman of the Reception Committee, urged the inauguration of the youth movement in Bengal with a detailed programme of extra academic activities, including co-operative work in villages. He repudiated the suggestion that the recent strikers in the Calcutta City College were inspired by any other motive than a deep sense of national wrong.

## Presidential Address.

Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru then rose amidst cheers and delivered the following presidential address:—

"You have done me the honour in inviting me to preside over this gathering of the youth of Bengal and I am grateful for it. But I have wondered what you wish me to say or do, what kind of message to deliver. I have no special message and you know well that I am no weaver of fine phrases or dealer in eloquence. To Bengal, justly known for her warm-hearted eloquence and love of art and beauty and passionate emotionalism, you have invited a dweller from the colder and sometimes much hotter regions of the north, whose ancestors came not so very long ago from the barren and snow-covered mountains that overlook the vast Indian plain, and I am afraid I carry with me something of the coldness and hardness of that mountain climate. A very great leader of Bengal and of our country, whose memory we revere to-day, once called me very justly "cold-blooded". I plead guilty to the charge, and since you have taken the risk of inviting me you will have to bear with my cold-bloodedness.

I have begun by drawing your attention to certain minor differences between us—a Kashmiri settled in the heart of Hindusthan, which is now called the United Provinces, and the residents of Bengal and yet you all know how unimportant are these differences, and how strong are the common bonds that tie us—the bonds of a common legacy from the past, of common suffering and the hope of building up a great future for this country of yours and mine. And indeed you can carry this comparison a little further, across the artificial frontiers that separate country from country. We are told of vital differences of race and character. Such differences there undoubtedly are, but how many of them are purely accidental due to climate and environment and education and how liable to change they are? You will find that the common bond is greater and more vital than the differences, though many of us may not realise the fact. It is the realisation of this common bond of humanity that has given rise to the great youth movement of to-day. Many of you may be too young to remember the despair and the feeling of revolt in the minds of youth during and specially after the Great War. Old men sat in their comfortable cabinets and banking houses and hid their selfishness and greed and lies under a cover of fine phrases and appeals for freedom and democracy, and the young, believing in these fine phrases, went out by the million to face death and few returned. Seventy millions of them were mobilised and of the fifteen millions that actually



served at the front, over eight millions died and over five and a half millions were maimed for life. Think of these terrible figures and remember that they were all youngmen with their lives stretching out in front of them and their hopes unfulfilled. And what did this awful sacrifice bring forth? A peace or violence and an aggravation of all the ills that the world was suffering from. You remember well that the first fruits of the peace in India were the Rowlatt Acts and Martial Law. You know also how the fine principle of self-determination which the allies shouted from the house tops, has been applied to India and to other countries. A new cloak for the greed of the imperialist powers was created in the shape of mandates and in awarding mandates the "principal consideration" was to be the preference of the inhabitants. This preference was shown unaccountably by rebellion against the British in Mesopotamia and rebellion against the French in Syria. But the aeroplanes and bombs were the British answer in Iraq and the ancient and beautiful city of Damascus was reduced to ruins by the French. In Europe itself the peace created far more problems than it solved.

#### Revolt of Youths.

Is it any wonder that the youths of the world rebelled and cast out their old time leaders on whom even the terrible lesson of the war was lost, and who still went on intriguing in the old way, and prepared for yet another and a greater war? Youth set about organising itself and set out to find the ways and means of establishing an order of society which would put an end to the misery and conflicts of to-day.

That is the basis of the World Youth Movement to-day. It is a larger and wiser basis than that of national freedom, for it becomes obvious to them that the narrow nationalism of the West lays the seeds of war and national freedom often results in the freedom of a handful of people only and the rest continue to suffer and be exploited. And so the youth of the world probed deeper into the cause of present day misery. They studied the economic and the social conditions of the people and they saw that although science and the changes that science had brought had in a few generations covered the track of centuries, the minds of men still lagged behind and thought in terms of the dead past. Science had made the world international and inter-dependent but national rivalries continued and resulted in war. Science had vastly increased production and there was enough for all and to spare but poverty continued and the contrasts between luxury and misery were marked than ever before. But if mankind is foolish and errs, facts do not adapt themselves to its errors. And the woe of our imagination conflicts with the world of reality and is it any wonder that chaos and misery result? Facts are not to blame for this. The troubles and the difficulties lie not in things but in our misconception of them and misinterpretation of them. Our elders fail frequently because they are rigid in their minds and unable to change their mental outlook or adapt themselves to changing facts. But Youth is not hidebound or rigid. Youth can think and is not afraid of the consequences of thought. Do not imagine that thought is an easy matter or that its consequences are trivial. Thought is not or should not be afraid of the wrath of the heavens or the terrors of hell. It is the most revolutionary thing on earth. And it is because youth dare think and dare act that it holds out the promise of taking out this country and this world of ours from the ruts and mire in which they have sunk.

#### Need for Clear Cut Ideal.

Are you, young men and women of Bengal, going to dare to think and dare to act? Are you prepared to stand shoulder to shoulder with the youth of the world, not only to free your country from an insolent and alien rule but also to establish in this unhappy world of ours a better and happier society. That is the problem before you and if you wish to face it squarely and fearlessly you will have to make up your minds to rid yourself and your country of every obstacle in your path, whether it is placed by our alien rulers or has the prestige of ancient custom. You must have your ideal clear cut before you—how else you hope to build the great structure of your dreams? Can you build a palace on

the foundations of mud hut or a fine bridge with straw? With definite ideals of your goal you will gain clearness of purpose and effectiveness of action and each step that you take will carry you nearer to your heart's desire. What shall this ideal be; National independence and perfect freedom to develop on the line of our own choosing is the essential requisite of all progress. Without it there can be no political or economic or social freedom. But national independence should not mean for us merely an addition to the warring groups of nations. It should be a step towards the creation of a world commonwealth of nations in which we can assist in the fullest measure to bring about world co-operation and world harmony.

### Stop all Exploitation.

But there can be no world co-operation so long as one country dominates over and exploits another and one group or class exploits another. Therefore we shall have to put an end to all exploitation of man by man or woman by man. You cannot have a purely political ideal for politics is after all only a small part of life although, situated as we are under alien rule, it dominates every branch of our activity. Your ideal must be a complete whole and must comprise life as it is to-day,—economic, social as well as political. It can only be one of social equality in its widest sense and equality of opportunity for every one. It is notorious that we have neither these to-day. Our womenfolk, in spite of the great examples of old that we are so fond of repeating, are shackled and unfree. Large classes of our countrymen have been deliberately suppressed by us in the past and denied all opportunities of growth in the name of religion and ancient practice. And all over India we see to-day millions toiling in field and factory and starving in spite of their toil. How can we rid these millions of their dire poverty and misery and make them share in the freedom to come? We hear of the service of the poor and sometimes even of the exaltation of the poor, and by a little act of charity or service we imagine that our duty is done. Having reserved very magnanimously the kingdom of Heaven for the poor we take good care to keep the kingdom of the earth for ourselves. Youth at least should be above this hypocrisy. Poverty is not a good thing, it is not to be exalted or praised but an evil thing which must be fought and stamped out. The poor require no petty services from us or charity. They want to cease to be poor. That can only come by your changing a system which produces poverty and misery.

In the course of the last few months you have seen the whole of India convulsed in labour troubles. Lock-outs and strikes and shootings have followed one after another. Is it amusing, do you think, to the workers to strike and starve and perhaps be shot? Surely no one does so unless his lot becomes unbearable and indeed the lot of the Indian to-day in factory or field is past all endurance. In the jute mills of your province the profits and reserve accumulations in ten years before 1926 amounted to nearly 440 crores of rupees. Think of this enormous figures and then see the condition of the poor workers in these mills and yet the jute workers, miserable as they are, have gone there because there was no room for them on the land or their conditions on the land were even worse. Can you expect any peace in the land when there is so much misery and so much contrast between wealth and object poverty? You cannot ignore these problems or leave them to a future age for solution and if you are afraid of tackling them you will find that facts can only be ignored at your peril. We are sometimes told that we must do justice between landlord and tenant and capitalist and worker, and justice means the maintenance of the 'status quo.' It is the kind of justice the League of Nations gives when it maintains the present 'status quo' with the imperialist powers dominating and exploiting half the earth. When the 'status quo' itself is rank injustice those who desire to maintain it must be considered as upholders of that injustice.

If your ideal is to be one of social equality and world federation then perforce you must work for a socialist state. The word socialism frightens many people in this country, but that matters little for fear is their constant companion. Ignorant of everything important that has happened in this world of thought

since they left their school-books they fear what they do not and will not understand. It is for you, the youth of the country, to appreciate the new forces and ideas that are convulsing the world and to apply them to your own country. For socialism is the only hope for a distressed world to-day. It is interesting to note that during the great war when a great crisis threatened to engulf the nations of the west, even the capitalist countries of Europe were forced to adopt socialistic measures to a large extent. This was not only done internally in each country but unable to resist the pressure of events, even internationally there was co-operation in many fields and national boundaries seemed to recede into the back-ground. There was economic co-operation of the closest kind and ultimately even the armies of many nations became one army under a single head. But the lesson of the war has been lost and again we drift towards a greater disaster.

Socialism frightens some of our friends, but what of communism? Our elders sitting in their Council Chambers shake their grey heads and stroke their beards in alarm at the mere mention of the word. And yet I doubt if any of them has the slightest knowledge of what communism is. You have read of the two new measures which are being rushed through the Assembly—one of them to throttle the Trade Union movement and the other to keep out people whom the Government suspects of communism. Has it struck you that it is a very curious thing that the mighty British Empire with all its tanks and aeroplanes and dreadnoughts should be afraid of a few individuals who come to spread a new idea? What is there in this idea that the British Empire should collapse like a pack of cards before this airy nothing? Surely you could not have better evidence of the weakness of this giant Empire which sprawls over the fairest portions of the earth surface. It is a giant with feet of clay. But if an idea is a dangerous thing it is also a very elusive thing. It crosses frontiers and customs barriers without paying any duty and bayonets and men of war cannot stop it. The Government of India must be strangely lacking in intelligence if they imagine they can stop any ideas from entering India by legislation.

What is this communist idea before which the British Empire quakes? I do not propose to discuss it here but I wish to tell you that though personally I do not agree with many of the methods of the communists and I am by no means sure to what extent communism can suit the present conditions in India, I do believe in communism as an ideal of society. For essentially it is socialism, and socialism I think is the only way if the world is to escape disaster.

And Russia, what of her? An outcaste like us from the nations and much slandered and often erring. But in spite of her many mistakes she stands to-day as the greatest opponent of imperialism and her record with the nations of the East has been just and generous. In China and Turkey and Persia of her own free will she gave up her valuable rights and concessions, whilst the British bombarded the crowded Chinese cities and killed Chinamen by hundreds because they dared to protest against British Imperialism.

In the City of Tabriz in Persia when the Russian ambassador first came, he called the populace together and on behalf of the Russian nation tendered formal apology for the sins of the Tsars. Russia goes to the East as an equal, not as a conqueror or a race-proud superior. Is it any wonder that she is welcomed?

Some of you may go in after years to foreign countries for your studies. If you go to England, you will notice in full measure what race prejudice is. If you go to the Continent of Europe, you will be more welcome whether you go to France or Germany or Italy. If any of you go to Russia, you will see how racial feeling is utterly absent and the Chinamen who throng the Universities of Moscow are treated just like others.

I have placed before you the ideas of internationalism and socialism as the only ideals worthy of the fine temper of youth. Internationalism can of course only come to us through national independence. It cannot come through the British Empire or the British Commonwealth of Nations, call it what you will, for the empire is to-day the greatest foe of internationalism. If in future England chooses to enter real World Federation, none will welcome her more than we, but she will have to shed her imperialism before she can enter. Our

quarrel is not with the people of England but with the imperialism of England. I have laid stress on internationalism although it may be a distant ideal for us. But the world is already largely international although one may not realise it. And situated as we are the reaction against foreign rule is apt to make us narrowly national. We talk of the greatness of India and of her special mission to the world and we love to dwell on her past. It is well that we remember our past for it was great and worth remembering. But it is for age to look back, youth's eyes should be turned to the future. And I have often wondered if there is any country in the world, any people who do not fancy that they have a special mission for the world. England has her "White man's burden" which she insists on carrying in spite of ungrateful people who object and rebel; France has her "mission civilisatrice"; America is "God's own country"; Germany has her "Kultur"; Italy has her new gospel of Fascism; and Russia her communism. And it has been so always. The Jews were the elect of the Lord, and so were the Arabs. Does it not strike you as strange that every country should have the identical notion of having a special mission to reform the world? If I may say so, every country has some mission in the world to enrich its culture in some way, and none need lay claim to being the chosen of the Lord.

Self-admiration is always a dangerous thing in an individual. It is equally dangerous in the nation for it makes it self-satisfied and indolent and the world passes by leaving it behind. We have little enough reason to be satisfied with our present lot, with many of our customs, with our excessive religiosity, with the lot of our women and the terrible condition of the masses. What good does it do us to waste our energy and our time in chanting praises of the dead past when the present claims our attention and work awaits us? The world changes and is changing rapidly and if we cannot adapt our society to the new conditions, we are doomed to perish. We have seen what can be done in a brief span of years and even months by a Kamal Pasha or an Amanulla who were not afraid to break through ancient customs and prejudice. What had been done in Turkey and backward Afghanistan can be done in India. But it can only be done in the manner of Kamal or Amanulla by fearlessly facing obstacles and removing them and not waiting till the crack of doom for slow reform. It is not a choice for you, as it was not a choice for Turkey or Afghanistan, between slow or rapid reform. It is a choice between extinction and immediate action. Turkey and Afghanistan chose the latter path and are reckoned to-day as great Nations. What will your choice be?

The world is in a bad way and India specially is in a perilous state in spite of the glitter and superficial splendour of your great cities. There are rumours of war and awful prophecies that the next war may result in irretrievable disaster to civilisation. But the very excess of evil may hasten the curse. Does not our own Gita state: "Greatmen have come from age to age in this country and elsewhere to help mankind. But greater than any man is the idea which he has embodied. And the conception of Dharma changes from age to age, and in a changing world a custom that was good in past times may be perilous to Society to-day. You do not go to Bombay to-day in a bullock cart or fight with bows and arrows. Why stick to customs which were good only in the days of the bullock cart and bows and arrows?"

And the great men who have come have always been rebels against the existing order. Two thousand five hundred years ago the great Buddha proclaimed his gospel of social equality and fought against all privilege, priestly and otherwise. He was a champion of the people against all who sought to exploit them. Then came another great rebel, Christ, and then the prophet of Arabia, who did not hesitate to break and change almost everything he found. They were realists who saw that the world had outgrown its ancient practices and customs and sought to bring it back to reality. The Avatars of to-day are great ideas which comes to reform the world. And the idea of the day is social equality. Let us listen to it and become its instruments to transform the world and make it a better place to live in.

I may be a weak instrument capable of doing little by myself in spite of my

ardent desire to do much. And you individually may be able to do little. But you and I together can do much and working with the awakened youths of this country we can and will achieve something. For youths only can save this country and the world. I do not admire the Fascists but I do admire them for having as their war cry a hymn to youth: "Giovinezza," and I wish you would also adopt their motto: "Live dangerously." Let our elders seek security and stability. Our quest must be adventure, but adventure in a noble enterprise which promises to bring peace to a distracted world and security and stability to the millions who have it not.

You and I are Indians and to India we owe much but we are human beings also and to humanity we also owe a debt. Let us be citizens of the Commonwealth of Empire of Youths. That is the only empire to which we can owe allegiance, for that is the forerunner of the future federation of the world.

### Resolutions.

The Conference met again on the 23RD SEPTEMBER when it deliberated on questions of vital interests not only to the youths of the country but also to the nation at large. Before the proceedings commenced an appeal to the students from the Young Comrades' League was read.

(1) The Secretary then having read the Report, the President put the Draft Constitution of the Association before the Conference, which was considered clause by clause and passed unanimously except that relating to age limit.

(2) The next resolution which was the subject of controversy related to "attempts being made to raise the age of marriage and the age of consent by legislation". A section of the house opposed it and adduced arguments in their favour, but they were defeated by an overwhelming majority.

(3) The resolution, namely, that "this Conference requests the various Railway authorities to make arrangements for students' touring carriages at reduced fares," was moved from the chair, and the president's remark if anybody would like to oppose it evoked a roar of laughter from the audience.

#### Resolution on Independence.

(4) Much debate and most interesting discussions centred round the resolution relating to the ideal of complete Independence for India. A delegate from Krisnanagar moved an amendment to the original resolution. There were many speeches on both sides and the President having expressed a desire to allow a full dress debate over the question, it was adjourned till the next day.

(5) This Conference records its support to the Calcutta University Bill which has been introduced in the Bengal Legislative Council by Dr. P. N. Banerjee and requests the members of the Council to support it.

(6) This Conference requests the students to use Swadeshi goods even if their prices may be higher than foreign substitutes.

(7) This Conference repudiates the theory of trusteeship of the British Parliament and considers the appointment of the Simon Commission as an act of invasion upon the rights of the people of India and condemns those members of the Assembly and of Provincial Councils who have voted for the appointment of the Committees to co-operate with the Simon Commission.

(8) This Conference records its full support to the attempts being made to raise the age of marriage and age of consent by legislation.

(9) This Conference condemns the Public Safety Bill, Trades Dispute Bill, Press Bill introduced by the Government in the Assembly.

(10) This Conference requests the University authorities and the Government of Bengal to recognise the right of representatives of the students in the Senates of Calcutta and Dacca Universities.

(11) This Conference is of opinion that every effort should be made to make Hindusthani the national language of India.

(12) This Conference condemns the action of the District Magistrate of Maldah who in collaboration with the Head Master of the Zilla school, a few teachers and guardians declared the Saraswati Library of Maldah organised by the students as an objectionable association.

(13) This Conference requests the authorities to introduce compulsory military training for the students of Bengal.

(14) This Conference requests the students over 18 years of age to enrol themselves as members of the Indian National Congress.

(15) This Conference strongly condemns the action the Government has taken and continues to take under the Ordinance Act of 1924 and Reg. III of 1918.

#### The Independence Resolution.

On the next day, the 24TH SEPTEMBER, quite an interesting discussion centred round the resolution supporting the ideal of complete independence and an amendment to it. The main resolution which was moved by Sj. Promatha Kumar Mukherjee, runs thus :—

"This Conference of the students supports the ideal of complete independence in contradiction to the principle of Dominion Status".

To this the following amendment was moved :—

"It being the proud tradition of students and youths of Bengal to have suffered life-long imprisonment and death for their country's freedom, the All-Bengal Students' Conference stands pledged to full and unqualified national independence and to make any sacrifice for the same".

When the amendment was put to vote it was lost. The original resolution recommending complete independence was then carried amidst deafening cheers.

(16) After this resolutions were moved and carried regarding the constitution of an All-India Students' Federation, organisation of Provincial and District Committees, and the starting of a students' organ in English.

(17) Resolutions recommending free and compulsory primary education among villagers, demanding the release of Kharag Bahadur and for organising a Volunteers' Corps were also carried unanimously.

(18) After this Sj. Satya Ranjan Ghatak moved a resolution disapproving the existence of communal educational institutions as they were detrimental to the healthy growth of nationalism. It was seconded by Mr. Abdul Majid and carried.

(19) A resolution condemning the amended Bengal Tenancy Act was moved by Mr. Abdul Aziz and carried.

(20) Another resolution requesting the Government to confer the same status to the students who had passed from the non-official Medical schools as were conferred on the students passing from official Medical Schools and to cancel the order on non-official Medical Schools not to use certain medicines was also carried.

After a vote of thanks to the Chair had been moved the Conference dispersed.

## The Behar Students' Conference

The twenty-first session of the Bihar Students' Conference was held at Matihari on Sunday the 4TH OCTOBER 1928 in the premises of the Heycock Academy amidst scenes of great enthusiasm. But the unavoidable absence of Prof. Vaswani, the President-elect, owing to illness, was very keenly felt by those present on the occasion.

The address of Prof. Vaswani was read to the audience by Babu Bajendra Prasad. He said that he was a mere stop-gap in place of Prof. Vaswani, the president-elect and would only undertake the responsibility of doing his work. The following is the full text of the address :—

#### Prof. Vaswani's Presidential Address.

You have chosen for the chair a man who is lover of silence and seclusion. I believe that silence is strength. And I have breathed out, again and again, an aspiration that I may have the strength to speak without words. I feel grateful that you have given me a corner in the temple of your hearts. What have I done to deserve it? I only know that I come to you with nothing but love in

my heart,—love and faith. I love the students. I love the young. I have faith in them. The nation of to-morrow is being made not in the paper resolution of our Conferences and Councils but in the deep, silent resolves of some among the students of to-day.

You and such of you in different parts of India I salute as the Builders of To-morrow. The pupils of Socrates the Yogi generated forces which shaped the thought and life of Europe. The young men who rallied round Mazzini and Garibaldi gave a new life to their nation long before Mussolini and his Black Shirts arose to rebuild a New United Italy. Wesley and Whitefield, students of the "Holy Club", initiated a Revival which, in the words of the English historian Green, "changed the whole tone of English Society". Buddha and Shankara! Each was a young man when he started on his world-mission. Each awakened India to a new life. The young have been the saviours of societies and nations. Somewhere is given a pretty legend. It tells of an invisible bell softly swinging and sounding a wonderful music. And all who will keep the inner chamber of their hearts open may hear,—the story says,—how the invisible bell rings and sings in holy twilight. My silence and seclusion have been filled with my cries to God:—"O Thou of the Ancient Days! Who will lead again India, our Ancient Mother, to the promised Land?" And then in the holy darkness before the dawn, methinks, I have heard an invisible bell ring and sing to me a mighty hope, a mighty faith:—"Let not thy heart be sad! The nation's youth yet will build,—rebuild,—India into a nation of Strong,—a nation of the Free!"

In this hope, in this faith, was founded on 18th March, 1927, in holy Hardwar the order of Young India known as the Bharat Yuvak Sangha. My message to you is the message of Sangha. I need your co-operation, your love and blessings in spreading the message of Sangha in your great province. The word Sangha is significant. It means "Fellowship". The Sangha aims at bringing together students' centres and youth associations throughout the country into one Fellowship, one Brotherhood of Service.

The Sangha is not identified with any one political party or creed but welcomes all, irrespective of party, creed or caste. Fellowship,—is the essential principle of the Sangha.

And its "mantra" is Shakti. The nation's urgent need to-day is "shakti" more "shakti"! Be strong!—is my earnest appeal to the nation's youth. Inheritors of an ancient past, possessors, too, of the rich revelations of modern science, you are called to be creators of mighty future. Behold! the pathways of the East are covered with ruins of the past! Behold! the highways of the West are strewn with ruins of the present,—ruins of the world-war which has an inevitable result of a cruel industrialism, an aggressive, unspiritual nationalism. India and Asia and the West ask for men and women of the New Spirit,—ask for new creators, for them that would build a new brotherly Civilisation,—a new Divine Humanity.

#### Be Creative!

Be not imitative! A new Creation is the call of the Spirit of the Future. A new creation,—not imitation! "Shakti" is creative. Imitation is weakness. If you are to go forward, release the creative "shakti" within you. Swaraj,—true Swaraj,—is born of "shakti", not imitation of this Western cult or that. For all imitation is emasculation, and India has a genius, an individuality, a soul of her own. To that must she be true if she would re-arise and go again upon her great mission to Humanity. Not imitation but creative renovation is the task to which the youth of India are called.

The Bharat Yuvak Sangha is not an imitation of any of the Youth-movements in the West. In the Russian youth-movement, the emphasis is on the training of the mind of the Russian youth. Sangha aims at a synthesis of the physical, mental, moral and spiritual. There are certain beautiful features of the Youth experiment in Russia. Young Russia understands the value of the modern. New world-forces are moving on. The spirit of times is moving; and you must move with it, or you will be left behind. Young Russia, also, recognises the place of woman in the educational and social reconstructions of life. I said our "mantra", our watchword, was "shakti". Have you forgotten that "shakti" is symbolised in Hindu scriptures as a woman, as a gracious lady.

## Woman Represents "Shakti".

And the "shakti" of India will not be released until the Indian woman comes to her own and secure her honoured place in the life of the country. Russia, too, has introduced self-Government in schools and colleges. The teachers do not punish their pupils. If a student does wrong, his case is referred to a committee of students. No external discipline will help; it is only self-imposed discipline which makes for creative self-realisation,—the divine purpose of life. But whereas important youth organisations in Russia attempt at eliminating religion, the Bharat Yuvak Sangha believes profoundly in a spiritual conception of life. Religion, indeed, is an important element in the life of India and is essential, I believe, to the building up of new social order, a new civilisation, a new Humanity, only we must not confound religion with sectarianism. The Russian Youth Movement has given ear to the great German thinker who makes the bold declaration :—"I say unto you,—God is dead!" The Sangha movement turns to the Rishi whose word to every student who sought admission to the ashrams was :—"I commit these to Heaven and Earth!" Sons of the Earth, ye also are—ye essentially are, sons of Heaven! This teaching of the great Rishis of the ancient and modern times, is proclaimed by the Bharat Yuvak Sangha. You belong to Heaven and Earth,—to the whole earth! You belong to Humanity? You belong to God! You do not belong merely to one little community or class; nor are you to one nation exclusively; you belong to Humanity.

You belong to the All!

You are of the Atman. The Eternal Self!

The youth movement organised by Benito Mussolini has done much for Italy. Mussolini I regard as second to none among the living men of action. A wonderful story this,—of Mussolini's life and activities. A blacksmith's son, a schoolmaster, a journalist; he had to wander for sometimes as an exile, eking out his livelihood by working as a bricklayer in Switzerland. He fought in the World war. He came out of it with his dreams shattered. Disillusioned but not disheartened, he worked in right earnest to build a band of young men. They came mostly from the so-called "lower classes". Wonderful was,—is, the patriotism of young Italy. Significant was the "oath" which Athenian young men took,—the "oath of Solon". Not less significant is the 'oath of the Fascisti'. It runs thus :—

By the blood of our 2000 martyrs whom we invoke as witnesses and judges of our action, we swear that for one year we will not wear on our persons any gold, silver or other precious metals or stones. We will work ardently without pay for the good of our country. We will give all superfluous ornaments to funds for supporting enterprises having goodness, civilisation, beauty and civic improvement as their object.

Self-confidence is their spirit. Self-reliance is a teaching given to members of Sangha. Its motto is :—Shakti! More Shakti! The motto of Fascism is :—

"Our country and not ourselves".

But whereas Fascism is essentially Roman in its conception of life, the Sangha is inspired by the ideals of India's Rishis. Mussolini's band of black Shirts was organised for war. The Sangha aims at organising the youth of India for no military fighting purpose but for constructive service and a new renaissance.

Perhaps the best known of the youth movement of Europe is the German Youth Movement. It started with the "Wander Vogel" (the "Wandering Birds"),—a beautiful name chosen by the youth who longed to escape the conventions and restraints of society and breathe a new air of freedom. It is significant to note that the "Wander Vogel" was founded by a Berlin sixth-form boy named Karl Fischer. He felt that his school was a prison. He wished to escape into the open; he desired to study German folksongs. The "Wander Vogel" was inspired by a noble, cultural motive. Soon the movement was split up into several groups. Some years later was founded another youth organisation named the "Pathfinders". Its emphasis was on military virtue and held up before young men the soldier's ideal. Some years latter a "New Pathfinders" association was started; it was antimilitarist. Recently, there have been started other youth movements which can hardly be distinguished from "sports" or "Athletics" movements. The many youth associations into which the German Youth Movement has been split up is an indication of German individualism.

Some weeks ago the youth organisations of the Workers Party refused to participate in the "Youth Festival" of Germany because a section of the German Athletes' Association in Silesia had sometime ago erected a monument to the ex-Kaiser! Modern India, too, suffers from over-individualism; and the danger ahead of the Indian Youth Movement is a similar danger of split. Individualism lends to break into revolt. And a number of youth movements in the West, it is true, are movements of revolt. The



emphasis in the Sangha is not on revolt, but Creativeness shakti,—not revolt but renovation, not revolt but rebirth, not revolt but Renaissance. The Sangha is meant to be essentially a movement of Renaissance.

It has a note of protest,—against dead customs and creeds, against conventions which repress and insincerities which stifle the soul. But the movement is not essentially one of revolt or rebellion. It is easy to understand why in the West they speak of "revolt of youth." In the West they want to break away from creeds and traditions: for creeds of the churches are in conflict with the new spirit of science. In India the truth has been taught, again and again, that there is no conflict between religion and science. Religion is the science of God. The Hindu scriptures refer to religion as Brahmvīdyā. Here, in India, then, you need not to break away from the Ancient Wisdom but to understand and appreciate and apply to modern conditions the spirit of culture and nature-communion and inwardness and idealism which made India young and vital in the long ago. Stifling customs must go. But national traditions have a value in education of the people. Evolution transcends, and therefore, absorbs but does not repudiate values of the past. To understand our ancient past is to build for the future.

I want the Indian Youth Movement to be an expression of India's own ideals, India's genius, India's Individuality. The German Youth Movement has a number of beautiful features such as love of simplicity, sense of discipline, institution of excursions inspired by a patriotic spirit of service of the village-folk. But do not forget that the same German Movement is developing a dangerous tendency. In Germany they talk of "the cult of the naked." Many young Germans are "naked culture" enthusiasts and see no use for clothes! Young and women may be seen naked bathing together in the lakes and without a stitch of clothing, making themselves "happy" on the shores and in the forests. These young enthusiastic advocates of the "cult of the nude" even urge that nakedness adds to beauty? The cult of the naked is becoming dangerously popular with the German Youth Movement. The Bharat Yuvak Sangha emphasises the ancient Ideal of Brahmacharya. I wish to see the Indian Youth Movement built in the spirit and ideal of Brahmacharya. "Youth Renaissance" then, is the word I use,—not "Youth Revolt." And, be it remembered, that by Youth Renaissance I mean no more revival. Man is creative.

Youth is the Energy of Renewal. Inheriting the Wisdom of the Rishis, inspired by Indian Ideals, work together to help in building up a new, a Greater India. Open a new speech in the history of India. The message of the Bharat Yuvak Sangha is essentially, a message of creative Shakti. Sons are ye of the Eternal! Young men have said to me:—"We have no money; we are not known; we are weak; what can we do?" And I say to them:—"You have no money; yes! You are not known; yes! But say not you are weak. A motto may well say:—the mighty sun is mine. A note of song may well declare:—The Blessed Song of the Lord is mine! A spark may well exclaim the Flame is mine! In you, young men, are locked up hidden forces! In you slumbers a great shakti!

Release it,—set free the hidden forces; and India will thrill from one end to the other. Sons of the Flame are ye! Awaken the hidden fire and fill the waiting world with a new glow. Be creative! "The world belongs to the Energetic"—said Emerson. He was a Rishi in tune with the ancient Rishis of the East. He voiced anew the Doctrine of 'Shakti,' when he said:—"The world belongs to the Energetic." Yes,—the world, the new world to be,—New India, New Orient, New Occident,—must incarnate creativeness, a new hope, a new faith, an immense optimism, a new energism. Progress in any line comes from some new awakened 'Shakti.' Current education has, I humbly submit, failed because it does not wake up creative 'Shakti.' Current education is an imitation. But it makes for 'keenness' you say? Yes,—the keenness of a sharp knife that cuts and sunders! The nation needs the 'shakti' that unifies, binds, and builds. Current education is a Cult of Separation.

Look at the English-education! What a gulf between them and the great masses! Current education has, in some measure, sharpened the intellect. But a sharpened intellect that divides us from the village-folk and helps us to trample upon the divinity of the poor and, at best, teaches us wordy 'patriotism,'—surely, is not a thing to be proud of. The essential thing is not sharpened intellect but a loving heart. Out of it are the great issues of life. An American magazine once portrayed President Wilson as a "great intellectual machine." And Wilson reading that article rightly remarked:—"It is no compliment to me to have said that I am a highly developed intellectual machine!" In Ashramas of the Sangha, Young men are taught to grow in the life of 'shakti.'

This life is one of integration. Body, mind, feeling, will and soul,—all these were brought together in one beautiful synthesis in the day when India was truly great and

mere tolerance. True reverence which, as Mark Twain said is "respect for another man's God." India's place in the great family of the nations will be determined by the measure of her loyalty to her spiritual idealism, her witness to the divinity of man, her wealth of the wisdom of life. India's leadership will not be of money and exploitation; her leadership will be of service and spiritual idealism. To young men studying in different colleges, I say:—Remember that education is essentially, the leading forth of the soul's vehicles,—the bodily senses and emotions and the mind. We have by affirmation, not negation God is the deepest affirmation of life. Indeed, the most dynamic part in the history of India is the part played by religion. Nor may you explain the world's history without religion. Bernard Shaw rightly says:—"Civilisation cannot survive without religion." The ancient word dharma is significant. This is how dharma is defined in the *Voiseeshika*:—"Yato bhyudaya Nihshreyasasiddhih as dharma." "What makes for Advancement in this world and Attainment in the next,—that is dharma."

### The Law of Advancement and Attainment.

Dharma is Shakti. Far, then, from asking you to eliminate religion in the name of nationalism, I say to you:—Make love of India a part of your religion. Our nationalism will be purer, richer, nobler, more dynamic in the day we appreciate and act up to the teaching of Shri Krishna to Arjuna:—"Whatever you do, do it unto Me! The nationalist movement in India will be invincible when we shall see in it the urge of a Divine purpose. I pleaded for a new nationalism,—one which may be inspired by the ideal of spiritual democracy. A bigger and nobler ideal than the socialist ideal. For socialism builds not best from without, not from within. Socialism does not go deep enough into the root of the creative life of nations. Socialism takes up a section of life,—the economic,—an important section and one we must not neglect. But we must remember, too, that life in its fundamentals, is a spiritual process. This gives an inner continuity to the life of India, the life of humanity. Young men, I ask you not to surrender this immortal heritage of India,—the sense of the Atman, the One Eternal Self, the Spirit of creative evolution.

With this sense of the Divine, this appreciation of the genius and ideals of India, this reverence for all religions and prophets and heroes of humanity, take up the Torch of Service and go to the village-folk who wait for you! The Sangha is meant to be essentially a Brotherhood of Service. The Sangha believes that India lives in her village. The Sangha believes that the nation must be built up from the bottom. The Sangha has a Village Uplift scheme which there is not time to explain. Hunger, poverty, illiteracy, insanitation have devitalised the village folk. Their health-consciousness is weak; their knowledge of the modern world-forces is nil: their understanding of the Indian ideals is poor, and piteous is their struggle for daily bread. Saviours of the villages are needed. To save them is to save the nation. They are the ancient roots of India's life and civilisation. An ancient Vedic text says:—"The root of the tree maintains the life of its trunk; so long as there is life in the trunk, the branches bear the foliage. The village is the root of our national life. But we have starved the root, we have trampled upon the claims of the villager. Patriotism is not noise, nor sentimentalism. It is shakti we need to win freedom. Therefore I humbly submit that every town, every village should have Shakti Ashrams to bring together some for the service of the poor. Tell them of the value of Indian history and the Indian ideal. Tell them of the growing world-force asking for India's mission to the nations.

In any practical programme for India's freedom, the emphasis, I humbly submit, must be not on "Council debates nor paper-resolution of political or Youth Conferences but on inner creative shakti expressing itself physically, mentally, morally. Build up healthy strong bodies; use the energy of mind and character in the fruitful channels of co-operative rural re-construction; train yourselves in the school of hardness and humility and be ready to offer in gladness your very life as a sacrifice to Him who hath sacrificed Himself to nourish the thought and life of Humanity. In a rich, vital, dynamic, spiritual idealism was the secret of India in the days of her greatness. And in high noises of the day, methinks, I hear a voice coming from the Silence, a voice which says:—"To-day as of old an inner shakti is needed to make the Nation free: For freedom is a child of Shakti. Three years have passed since I first came to your great Province in Behar. It was my privilege during my stay in Patna then to come in contact with many Beharers of Rajgarh. There did Buddha spend a number of years in meditation on the mystery of life. And there is a rock-cut place,—a cave,—named Sonbandar ("Goldstore") with plenty of gold, but that none can open the cave,—not even the cannot ball,—None but Buddha; for he will come again to India's hallowed earth, he will, we are told, visit the

Sonbhandar and he will open it and spend the rich treasures of gold lying there for centuries,—he will spend them in the service of the poor; and a new age will then begin. To me this story is a beautiful parable symbolic of a great truth. For in the heart of every one of you, young men; there is Sonbhandar,—a Treasure-house of Love. Open it I say. Open it and spend the store of your knowledge and love in the service of the poor. And, believe me, you that are young will break the Mother's chains! And you will be among the builders who build a mighty temple of New Liberty.

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## The Punjab Students' Conference.

Presiding over the first Punjab Students' Conference held at Braithwaite Hall, Lahore on the 6TH OCTOBER 1928, Dr. Alam advised the youngmen to rebel against the spirit of communalism which he thought was responsible for India's multitudinous troubles and pleaded for complete abolition of denominational institutions and separate electorates.

"India depends solely upon its youth for the great revolution in ideas not only to benefit herself but to remove the misery and suffering of mankind throughout the world. To revolt and rebel is the privilege of youth; but revolt not against individuals and rebel not against groups; rebel and revolt against old ideas, customs, institutions and convictions".

"What I really require of you, youngmen, to-day is not so much lessons in Milton and Shakespeare but real pluck of life. You are destined to become future administrators of India and nothing should prevent you from taking prominent part in the political life of the country".

"Politics," Dr. Alam concluded, "is not reserved for those whose next move is to grave. Realise your rights and duties and organise yourselves for the salvation of your motherland".

### LALAJI'S OPENING SPEECH

"Think dangerously. There can be no progress in this world unless people begin to think dangerously against the existing order of things," declared Lala Lajpat Rai in course of his opening address at the Conference.

Continuing Lalaji referred to the question whether the students should take part in politics or not. "Politics," said Lalaji, "is the very breath of life and it is absolutely a necessary breath of life of the people subject to a foreign rule. You cannot get without politics and those who ask you not to think of politics, not to participate in politics, ask you to become hypocritical". Lalaji advised the students to study, think, discuss and understand politics. But he cautioned them against rushing into action in the political sphere without carefully weighing consequences thereof. He held that the chief business of an ordinary student is to study and those students alone who felt a higher call in themselves to serve their country and were prepared after careful consideration to face the consequence of their action through suffering and privation, were justified in withdrawing themselves from their studies and launching into action in the political field. He described the educational policy of Government as conceived and carried out in a political spirit and severely criticised the policy and practice of the education department of the Punjab Government and the text book selection committee in regard to the selection of text books for schools and colleges.

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## The All-India National Social Conference.

The All-India National Social Conference met in the Congress ground, Calcutta on Tuesday the 25TH DECEMBER 1928 at 3 p.m. under the presidency of Mr. M. R. Jayakar. The Pandit proved to be much too small for the delegates and visitors among whom there was noticeable a fair sprinkling of ladies.

Prominent among those present were Principal Urquhart, Profs. Radhakissen and Bhandarkar, Mr. and Mrs. P. Chaudhury, Mrs. B. L. Chaudhury, Sir Deva Prasad Sarbadhikary, S. J. Vijayaraghava Achariar, Sir P. O. Roy, Mrs. Brijlal Nehru, Mrs. Bhandarkar,

Mrs. Kamala Devi Chattopadhyaya, Mrs. P. K. Roy, Dr. B. N. Banerjee, Dr. Nareesh Sen Gupta, S. J. Shyamsunder Chakravarty, Mr. S. C. Mukherjee, S. J. Bipin Chandra Pal and S. J. Sarat Chandra Bose.

### Chairman's Address.

After paying tribute to the President, Mr. Jayakar and mourning the loss of the great social worker, Lala Lajpat Rai, Mr. Nirmal Chunder CHUNDER, as the Chairman of the Conference welcomed the delegates and in his short address said:—

It is for emancipation that Lalaji worked and it is for emancipation that his countrymen must work. The progressive realisation of social emancipation is as much a contradiction in terms as the progressive realisation of political independence, for in either case there is an assumption that emancipation or independence is attainable without a violent revolution of ideas and attitudes. Each measure in pursuance of a scheme of progressive realisation is an obstacle for the next measure.

Leaving aside the remote past let us take some of the present day measures of social reform. Rescue work is now the rage of the day. But I have not yet been able to find the solution of the problem of what these rescued girls would do in after life. If things are allowed to drift on as they are doing the posterity may find these educated or semi-educated girls greater dangers to society than they could have been if left to themselves. It has almost become the fashion now-a-days to start widows' homes. But unless widows are given greater liberties and ideas of sexual morality radically improved, I fail to understand how it would be possible to provide homes for the millions of destitute or semi-destitute widows. Instead of cuttings and clippings here and there, there must be a root and branch reform. The relation of the sexes must be readjusted. Frankly speaking, I am not in a position to say that the conservatives talk undiluted nonsense when they claim that a sudden change either of the age of marriage or of the age of consent will be fraught with novel dangers; if it is assumed that society will not be reconstituted out and out and will be progressively reformed. There cannot be a moral or any justification for refusing to one whole sex the right to develop their faculties and realise their existence in the ways best suited to them according to their capacities and inclinations. Are we going to concede this right to the other sex?

Hitherto our social reform activities have been confined more or less within particular communities or castes. They have not been worked out on a national basis though they have been prompted by National motives. The result has been that while it has broadened the ideas of communities in their internal dealings it has stiffened their attitudes towards other communities in their external relations. This has made it possible for the one too-friendly alien Government to set up one community against another and one caste against another without any break in the exploitation of all equally and indifferently.

The ideal of complete independence in social matters, that is to say the ideal which tends to the renovation of society is not merely the ideal which is worth living for and dying for but is one which can be easily reached as it will meet less powerful though sinister opposition. The opposition in fact has no firmer or more solid basis than the traditional love for ancestral faiths and the imaginary fears of hereditary superstitions.

It was here in Bengal that the flag of social revolt was first unfurled by Raja Ram Mohan Roy. It was here that the flag was kept flying by Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar who was born just 13 years before Raja Ram Mohan Roy died. It was here again in Bengal that Keshab Chandra Sen and Swami Vivekananda led devastating inroads on orthodox beliefs and orthodox practices. Let it be in Bengal the social reformers of India in a body determine to carry on their fight from day to day in a systematic and concerted manner until they succeed in reconstituting the Indian society on a completely national foundation.

Sir, please do not misunderstand me to mean that I ignore the value of the services which great Indians born in provinces other than Bengal have rendered to the cause of social reform in this country.

### The Presidential Address.

Mr. Jayakar in the course of his presidential address at the Social Conference said:—

I can recall without difficulty the time when social reformers were regarded as a sixth pariah community, to be shunned and avoided even from national functions during this eventful week of the year. But now the question was debated whether India was fit to be politically free before liberty of conscience and freedom of social behaviour were attained. A variety of literature can be

recalled, even up to recently, in which the question was seriously considered, whether India was entitled to self-government as long as the domination of priesthood continued.

The social reform movement has undergone rapid changes during the last 15 years. Overwhelmed as we are by far-reaching political problems, we scarcely notice the social revolution which is occurring, to which the historian of the future will devote more attention than to dramatic events in the political field. Ideas have been marching by kangaroo jumps. In every important department of our social activity striking changes have taken place. These are specially conspicuous in public sentiments relating to women's regeneration and uplift. The social reformer will not now be content with the redressing of small or petty grievances. He should like to examine the very foundations of our social or religious structure from which minor disabilities spring. "Deal with fundamentals and leave the non-essentials alone." This is the cry in the country, and it is but natural that the same slogan should be raised in our social or religious efforts.

#### Caste System.

The most noteworthy direction in which this change is perceptible is the institution of caste. Whatever might have been the origin of castes in India or the economic purpose which they served at one time when India was differently circumstanced, there is no doubt that it is being increasingly felt that the institution of caste is a very severe handicap on our effort towards freedom. Those who are in touch with the Non-Brahman movement or with the agitation in favour of the Depressed Classes, will be able to vouch that the problem has been so rapidly changing its form, under the stress of modern forces, that the agitation is now for a complete readjustment of the old-world arrangements of our social life. In former times, the barriers of caste, when attacked, caused noise. Now they fall without sensation. The demolition of these barriers will, I am sure, be further accelerated by social reformers undertaking or encouraging a scientific study of the origin and growth of castes historically and ethnologically. Such a course of study based on a careful perusal of Census Reports, Gazetteers, accounts of travellers and similar publications, will form a wonderful solvent. It will readily melt caste pride and self-sufficiency, by laying bare the constituents which have historically entered into the formation and development of castes. He will realize that castes are, like the great river Ganges, fed by Himalayan snowflakes as also by the soils of squalid towns. He will then find that castes take their colour, like a river, from the soil through which they advance, and their true function is to lose themselves in the swelling current of national life, fertilizing individual effort and not to run a solitary course to disappear in the barren sands of conceit and futility.

The "Shuddhi" movement of the orthodox Hindu, though originally intended for re-conversion from alien faiths, has been a contributory cause of this change. "Shuddhi" cannot be restricted any more to its original necessities. The "Shuddhi" movement has evoked aspirations and obligations on either side, which are having a great effect on a general levelling up of Hindu society.

Take also the Sanghathan movement. Sanghathan means contact, combination and association. It is impossible to have these unless people meet on equal footing. About two years ago I saw a magnificent spectacle in Bombay of the effects of Sanghathan.

#### Social Legislation.

I cannot here refrain from referring to the attitude of the Government in matters of social legislation. Whenever it suits them, they show the courage of putting on the Statute Book measures of great unpopularity, excusing their behaviour with the comment that they knew better than the people what is good for them and must lead public opinion and not be led by it. Their attitude however is entirely different when social questions arise in the Legislatures. Their assistance then cannot be had and they are very often content to remain neutral. Even Bills about which there is not much controversy and which reformed Indian opinion favours, have not succeeded in obtaining anything like a whole-

hearted support from the Government. It seems to me obvious that it is the duty of social reformers to lesson the temptation of Government to fight shy of social legislation. We do not sufficiently understand the importance and the utility of legislative action in re-moulding the social conditions of the country. It seems to me that in India both the Government and the people underrate the importance of this means of social regeneration, partly owing to the feeling that a Government which is alien in personnel should not interfere in social matters. This, in my opinion, is not only a wrong but a mischievous view, for it enables Government to become more and more shy in such cases, and it also widens the cleavage between the Government and the people in social ideals. A Government that has undertaken the duty of ruling an alien people ought, in my opinion, not to remain alien in sentiment even if it may have, for political reasons, to remain for a time alien in personnel. May I remind them that a Government that keeps for long alien in sentiment undermines itself?

#### Women's Movement.

I now pass on to another great feature of the modern times, viz., the women's movement. I can only deal with one aspect of it, viz., woman's right to hold and inherit property, as also her general status as a daughter, wife and widow. Beginning with the question relating to women's power of acquiring and holding property, which question is connected with the Law of Inheritance, I may say without any fear of contradiction that it has varied from time to time in Hindu Law. It is clear that the status now accorded to women as daughters, wives or widows, is considerably inferior to that which they occupied in times when the Aryan immigrant in India had developed his best institutions in the free and pure latitudes in which he lived in Vedic times. That period may be regarded as the best in Indian history when the sentiments of the Indian people had not received the adulteration from foreign sources which they acquired in subsequent times. The Vedas have many charms, but the best of them is that they reveal the Aryan mind in the best of its attributes. The student of the Vedic period finds scattered from place to place evidence that women occupied a very elevated place in the society of those days.

Woman's descent began at a later period, apparently at a time when, owing to the migration of the community to lower plains it was brought into conflict with inferior aboriginal races. Under the militant necessities consequent on such an environment, males acquired an artificial importance. Every male that the family could put forward was an asset in the fight. Every son added to the house was a protection in the conflict. The preference of distant male relatives over near female relatives, which is to-day the distinguishing feature of the Hindu Law in many parts of India, is also to be traced to the same period. The rule that sapindas up to the remotest degree should be exhausted before the nearest sapinda can come in the order of succession, is a relic of these times. Polygamy and niyoga entered into the Aryan system of life.

#### Women's Needs.

After a historical review, Mr. Jayakar said :—

The result is that Hindu Law which has a very large resilience and power of adaptability has remained unresponsive to the requirements of the times in the British period. The adaptability of the Hindu Law is surprising to those who study it from this point of view. Whenever an Indian judge of learning, insight, sympathy and knowledge has had the chance of interpreting the ancient texts, he has tried his best to bring them into accord with the growing requirements of modern society. The result is that to-day there are a large number of anomalies waiting to be set right. To depend upon judicial interpretations for doing this work would take centuries. It is necessary, therefore, that legislation should take a hand in this work of reform. It is most urgently needed to-day in improving the position of the widow in a Hindu joint family. When the husband dies undivided, we are all aware of her miserable lot. She cannot get her husband's share if she is without male issue. The rules under which maintenance is decreed to her are unjust. They all lean in favour of her husband's coparceners. A vague sort of feeling that a Hindu widow must

be an ascetic before her age and inclinations make it possible, has restrained British Indian judges from interpreting the law in a plain, natural and modern sense.

Again, there is no reason why all over India the daughter should not take her father's estate absolutely as she does in Bombay. The artificial distinction is unknown to the "Mitakshara," of inheritance from males and inheritance from females, nor of males in her husband's family or in her father's family. All these distinctions have reference to a period which had extraordinary social and military necessities, no longer operative in Hindu society. The time has come when, in thorough conformity with the true spirit of Hindu Law, which is rationalism, equality and humanity, changes should be made.

Women claim that the marriageable age of girls should be raised. Women demand that they should have a much larger circle to choose from. This present system is many times a great handicap, especially for communities whose numbers are small. The necessary result of this limitation is that women have not infrequently to marry their near relations. This has the consequence that the same social type is multiplied and the race deteriorates. The cry is therefore going up which will increase in intensity, that the marriage law should be so reformed as to enable persons to marry outside their communities into others which have an affinity of origin, habits or avocations. It would be advisable to mould the marriage law so as to give this relief. In short, their demand is that they should have a right to marry according to choice, irrespective of the narrow limitations of caste. Some may regard it as a very bold demand, but I feel certain, whether bold or otherwise, it is bound to succeed before long. It is increasingly felt by women that the most sacred function of their life is marriage, which will become more and more a complex affair, having regard to the education and freedom which they will increasingly enjoy under changing conditions. They refuse to be bottled up in the choice of the husband, which they regard as the apex of the freedom which they enjoy. Women have been given the vote for the Legislatures. In many places they are now entitled to enter Legislative bodies, and it will not be long before they take their proper place there and frame laws for themselves. Men will have to make way for them. This is only a question of time, and it will be wisdom for men to help this process rather than obstruct it.

Similarly, women demand that the present-day laws relating to divorce, remarriage and maintenance, which in their opinion are foolish, irrational and one-sided, should also be altered in accordance with the requirements of modern society. In many places the cry has gone up for the right to apply for a divorce under certain conditions not inconsistent with Hindu scriptures. They are aware that marriage is a sacrament, but feel that, even under orthodox conceptions of marriage, the right to divorce will have to be conceded under conditions which have a foundation in ancient Hindu Law. If marriage is a religious sacrament, it can only be performed once. Sacraments are not intended to be repeated as often as a well-filled purse can desire. A sacrament is usually bilateral. Women contend that men have broken through their obligations. They urge that, if a man can marry as many times as he likes, why cannot a woman separate herself from such a person. It is difficult to give a rational answer to this question.

### Conjugal Rights.

Similarly, the laws relating to the restitution of conjugal rights are anomalous. The husband has a right, under the present law, of asking a Court to compel his wife to go and live with him. This right is very wide, and women complain that it should be curtailed. In cases where a man has a multiplicity of wives, or is afflicted by an incurable disease or has been guilty of palpable moral obliquity, the Court should not grant him restitution. Likewise, in the case of minor girls, until they attain the age of majority, they should not be compelled, against their wishes, to live with their husbands. Under the present law, restitution can only be prevented if it is proved to the satisfaction of the Court that the husband has an illicit sexual attachment in his own house or that the wife's life is in danger. In all other cases, speaking generally, the girl has

compulsorily to go and live with the husband irrespective of her age and other considerations.

These are all important questions relating to women's rights. I have touched only a few of them to indicate the nature of women's grievances. The discontent amongst women is growing, and unless legislation is taken up in proper time, a stage may be soon reached when they will openly rebel and perhaps carry the rebellion into the peace and harmony of domestic life. It will be wise, therefore, to help this movement rather than let it drift into futile or bitter channels. In women, the social reform movement ought to find a natural ally, and this alliance is sure to grow strong, if we could accord to their grievances a proper place in our scheme of social reform.

The rescue of minor girls is another important question on which public attention has to be concentrated. I am glad to find that in Bengal. There are a number of Homes, viz., "The Refuge," the Greaves' Home, the Hindu Abala Ashram and the Deshbandhu Home (now under construction). Unfortunately in Bombay we are not so very fortunate.

The abolition of woman labour in mines and factories is another prolific source of irritation. It has not yet come within the domain of social reform, but it is high time now that this question was also included in the programme of social reform. The evils of this system of labour are well known, and it is not necessary for me to dilate on them. What is wanted is an organisation solely devoted to the removal of this grievance, and constant agitation has to be kept up in order to invite public attention to its excesses.

I would suggest another topic on which propaganda can be usefully carried on, viz., physical culture of women. It was reported in the Press a year ago that girls in England, in the course of a few years, had increased their height by one-fourth to half-inch. This is the result of a slow, patient endeavour at body-building. The need of such an effort is nowhere greater than in India, where early marriages are frequent and birth regulation is unknown.

Concluding Mr. Jayakar said :—

It is a very encouraging sign that we in India are becoming appreciative of the extended scope of social reform. New questions are coming to light. Old grievances disappear either because they are redressed or cease to irritate. What is now wanted in the movement is a spirit of adaptation which will adjust it into new conditions as they arise, and a bold faith in human effort. To-day the atmosphere in which social reformers have to work is in many ways more favourable than the one which surrounded their forbears thirty years ago. A happy approximation is taking place between social and political reform. They are no more two water-tight or isolated compartments. Their affinity is recognised. Their inter-relation makes for a true love of freedom. The human mind wishing to be free recognizes no compartments or barriers of ideas. Its ambitions know no frontiers. The problem of reform, whether one calls it political, social or economic, is at bottom one. It is set for us and has to be faced whether we will or not. Cataclysmic changes going on in the world round us are compressing the work of centuries into a few years and making for a new Heaven and a new Earth. In this expected re-birth of human society what part shall we Indians elect to play? That is the crux of the situation. Let there be no delusions about it.

### Resolutions.

After the presidential address was over, condolence resolutions recording the deaths of Lala Lajpat Rai, Mr. S. R. Das, Mr. Prithwis Chand Ray and Mr. Pijuskanthi Ghosh were moved and passed after which the Conference adjourned for the day.

The Conference re-assembled on the next-day, the 26TH DECEMBER, when the following resolutions were also moved and passed :—

#### Abolition of Caste System.

Sir P. C. Roy moved the following resolution :

"This Conference is of opinion that the present caste system is a great obstacle to the unification of the Hindu Society, and therefore resolves that its



abolition should be expedited: (a) by encouraging free inter-dining; by promoting inter-caste marriages; and (c) by removing untouchability and all disabilities arising therefrom wherever they exist, e.g., in the way of using the public roads, wells etc., in the matter of entry into public services and public institutions like hostels, etc. or in any manner.

#### Inter-Caste Marriage.

Mrs. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya moved the following resolution:—"That with a view to promote National Unity this Conference recommends: (a) that inter-caste and inter-communal dinners be encouraged; (b) that freedom be given for inter-marriage among the several communities inhabiting in India.

Principal Ramdeb of Gurukul moved for the deletion of clause (b) regarding freedom for inter-marriage. The amendment was negatived, 42 voting for and 82 against it and the original resolution was carried by a majority.

#### Evils of Early Marriage.

Mrs. Brij Lal Nehru moved the following resolution:—"This Conference views with alarm the evil consequences of early marriages and is of opinion that in view of the preventing conservatism of the people, it is necessary that the marriageable age of boys and girls should be regulated by legislation. This Conference therefore lends its whole-hearted support to the provisions of the Sarda Bill and requests the Central Legislature and the Government of India to give their full support to the same." The resolution was carried.

After the President had moved some other important resolutions and summed up the debate, the proceedings of the Conference were brought to a successful close.

## The Women's Social Conference.

The All-India Women's Social Conference was held in the Congress ground, Calcutta on Thursday the 27TH DECEMBER in the afternoon. The Junior Maharani of Travancore, the most advanced of all Indian States, presided. The gathering was very big, representative and singularly successful. Distinguished visitors from outside Bengal included the Rani of Mandi, Rani of Vijayagram, Maharaj Kumari of Vijayagram, Mrs. Gandhi, Mrs. Motilal Nehru, Mrs. Sultan Singh, Rani Raghubir Kawi of Kalsia, Lady Zulfiqar Ali Khan, Lady Ali Imam, Mrs. Amir Hossain, Sm. Anurupa Debi, Lady Bose, Sm. Sarala Devi, Mrs. P. K. Naidu, Miss Krishna Nehru, Sm. Swarnalata Debi and Sm. Latika Basu.

Sm. Sarala Devi opened the Conference with a beautiful Bengali song specially composed by her for the occasion. After the speech of the Chairman of the Reception Committee, the Dowager Maharani of Mayurbhanj, Sm. Setu Parvati Bai, Junior Maharani of Travancore, delivered her address. The following is the text:—

Fellow delegates and friends:—In accepting the offer conveyed to me some-time ago to preside over this Conference, I may assure you that I regarded the invitation not merely, or, even mainly, as a mark of personal honour, though I am not oblivious of this aspect but chiefly as a compliment paid to my State which, I may recall with pride, occupies a very remarkable and almost unique position along with the sister State of Cochin in the matter of Women's education and general advancement.

It is not my object to deal historically with the position of women in recent times or in this country through the ages. It would not, however, be out of place to make just a few observations on these general topics. Until nearly a century ago, notwithstanding great examples of statesmanship, saintliness and eminence in the arts, of exceptional women like Catherine the Great of Prussia, Queen Elizabeth and Queen Victoria of England, Joan Of Arc who have been

recently canonized and several others, the legal position of women in western countries was very anomalous and their rights of property and of free self-expression extremely truncated; and it was not without strenuous struggle that woman's place in society is being gradually won even in the West. I shall only remind you in passing of the Feminist Movement, of the struggle for the tolerable living conditions of Women workers, of Mrs. Pankhurst's efforts and of the perhaps disproportionately striking demonstrations as a result of which alone the European woman has enfranchised herself politically and educationally in the matter of education although what were termed elegant accomplishments were always imparted to the well-born and the rich; the Universities and the centres of culture even in the West were apt to look askance at any pretensions to equal treatment between men and women in the homes of learning and not even the marvellous work of savants like Madame Curie was sufficient by itself to eliminate the idea of the unfitness of women for laborious and sustained scientific or literary work. Phenomena like George Eliot and Mrs. Browning were regarded as so exceptional that the implications of their existence were not taken note of. It required the world war and the orientation of men's minds that succeeded that war, as well as the necessity of the economic situation and the urgency of the co-operation of women and men in all fields of work and thought, completely to emancipate the women in the West.

#### Indian Women of Vedic Age.

Far different has been the history of the Women's movement in this country. To start with, speaking for the moment, of the Hindu system, it is now recognized that in ancient India when the Vedas and the Upanishads were produced and when this country was passing through one of its periods of real achievement, the woman was as active a member of society as man. The researches of scholars have now demonstrated that some of the Vedic Hymns owed their origin to women and amongst us there have been not only singers of sacred scriptures but authors of law books and mathematical experts. In regard to the right of property also, Hindu Law at its inception was very liberal in the vindication of the rights of women to inherit property and it is argued that such rights were restricted only by recent judge-made legislation initiated by men who, unconversant with the original texts, have failed either to march with the times or to allow for and encourage the evolution of society on natural lines. The rights of the wife and the daughter and other female relatives to a share in property were wider in ancient and mediaeval India than they are to-day. But on the other hand even now, in many European systems women's rights are not as well safeguarded and recognized as in our Smritis. Speaking of my own country of Kerala, it may not be very well-known to all the members of this audience that the woman is the pivot of the family and her rights are fundamental and extensive. A large proportion of the property in Malabar stands in the name of and is enjoyed by the woman as the head of the house-hold and innumerable examples of careful management and masterly administration can be produced from our annals.

I need not recount to you the powers and the achievements of the mediaeval and modern queens of India beginning with Ahalya Bai and Queen Mangammal and I am sure, not ending with the Begum of Bhopal.

There are many misconceptions about the position of women in the Islam, but speaking to this enlightened audience, it is needless for me to advert to the fact that the property rights of women perhaps stand better in no system of jurisprudence than in the Mohammadan. Moreover, it is well-known that the Prophet of Islam was not, when properly understood, either an advocate of polygamy or of the purdah. As far as one can see and here I am speaking with considerable diffidence, the Prophet Mohammad, in fixing four as the maximum number of wives, was intent on hastening the reform in the direction of curtailing the excessive number of marriages that the nomadic tribes permitted themselves before his time; and careful students of the Muhammadan sacred scriptures have assured us that there is nothing in the Koran or elsewhere in support of the interpretation often put upon this injunction. The system of purdah arose no doubt, from the incidents and accidents of a nomadic or a fighting life and

soon after the Muhammadan conquest, in India there was, perhaps, a qualified necessity for the seclusion of women in times of disturbance and turmoil and constant fighting; but it soon became a matter of prestige and honour. The result was that not only the Muhammadans but the more aristocratic Hindus and the Princes adopted the habit less and less out of necessity and more and more out of notions of prestige. At the risk of treading upon dangerous grounds, may I be permitted to suggest that the system has outlived its usefulness and is to-day a great handicap in every way to the woman's case. Immured in the purdah, a woman is unable to take her place in the governance of the family when deprived of the protection of a husband or a brother or a son; loss of property and the mismanagement of estates is not the greatest of the evils that result from this system.

#### Mother's Share in Nature Building.

It is a profound physiological and psychological truth that the character of the younger generation is moulded much more by the mother than by the father in the plastic years of infancy and non-age. At the risk of vanity, let us remind ourselves that it may well be contended that most great men of the world have owed more to their mothers than to their fathers, and a long list is available to the curious in the pages of Professor Lombroso. It is from the point of view of shaping the destiny of the next generation that I feel impelled most strongly to urge upon the women of India the imperative necessity of equipping themselves adequately as instruments of national regeneration. When I say this, I do not lay emphasis so much upon literacy or school or college education but on something beyond and above literacy which can be gained only by a knowledge of the world, by free and equal association with our fellow-beings and an understanding and sympathy with the world's problems as they present themselves to us from time to time. Although, the women behind the purdah may be highly educated, as indeed many of them are, and are masters of many arts and sciences, yet the absence of contact at first hand with the world and its problems is a handicap which is irreplaceable. It is these considerations which seem to me to be behind the general movement on the part of Indian women to break through the purdah. As in the case of all social reforms there is bound to be considerable prejudice and opposition. As in the case of most other social reforms also, although the progress that is made may appear to be slight and disappointing, it is going on all the time and the result is certain. It is a fortunate circumstance that in my State, and the country of Kerala, generally not only is the purdah system practically unknown, but women have a freedom of movement which is perhaps unique in India.

#### Achievements of Travancore and Cochin.

Our marriage system is based on the theory of consent and although inroads have been attempted on that system, yet no reflecting student of human affairs can fail to realise that enlightened opinion throughout the world is making an approach to the ideals underlying that system. I may claim with pardonable pride that on account of the matriarchal structure of society in Malabar, not only have we and the communities that follow the system practically abolished illiteracy and the evils of seclusion but can claim in the matter of female education that Travancore and Cochin lead not only amongst the India States but perhaps most if not all the British provinces.

#### Disastrous Effect of Early Marriage.

I come now to the question of early marriage and of child-widowhood. It is a very sad feature of Indian society that the proportion of widows in the population for every ten thousand is 41 between the ages of 15 and 20; 71 between 20 and 25; 146 between 25 and 35; and 325 between 35 and 40, the corresponding figures for England being nil, 15, 13 and 50. It is also a melancholy circumstance that between the ages of 1 and 5, there are seven widows for every ten thousand and between the ages of 5 and 10, 45 widows for every ten thousand. This large number is due partially to the early age of marriage, partially to the difference in the ages of husbands and wives but mainly to the prejudice against

the remarriage of widows. It is remarkable that even amongst the castes which do not forbid remarriage altogether the custom is supposed to be a hall mark of respectability and a number of communities have adopted that system and even Mahammadans who are in various parts of the country closely brought into touch with their Hindu neighbours are apt to share that prejudice. Without entering into fundamental questions of eugenics, one can gainsay that something is radically wrong in a system which permits of child widows between the ages of 1 and 15 and which tolerates the existence of over seventy thousand widows between the ages of 1 and 5 years of age. No scriptures can have sanctioned or encouraged this practice and no terms of reproach could be too strong against a state of things which has led to this result. I purposely refrain from discussing the vexed question of the exact age of consent of the benefits of comparatively early matrimony. There is something, perhaps, to be said against the social or anti-social effects of undue delay in marriage but more can be urged against too early marriage in the matter of the enfeeblement of the race and the weakening of its stamina. It is a matter for profound gratification that enlightened opinion especially amongst the Hindus and also gradually amongst Mahomedans is declaring itself forcibly and unmistakably in favour of later marriages.

The blame, I am afraid, is as much on the part of women as on the part of men and this Conference representing as it does the enlightened consciousness of the women of India owes to itself and women generally a duty to plead for a just treatment of the age of consent as well as for an eradication of the evils of child-widowhood and a remedying of its evils. Public opinion has to be educated in these matters and in regard to such topics as the ruinous dowry system whose long train of evils is one of the features of later-day Indian life. Rigidly narrow and orthodox views have to be surmounted. But it cannot be forgotten that public opinion is only the consummation of individual opinion and if each one who feels strongly on these topics carries out this conviction in her own family and environment, the effect is bound to be striking.

While on this topic, may I be permitted not only to remind ourselves but our brethren that the great difficulty in the way of Indian progress is the divorce between conviction and practice which has been so marked in the past and which has not even now died out. Many an ardent social reformer, while eloquent on public platforms, is perhaps apt to abate his zeal and to weaken his advocacy when in his own environment and he ascribes his feebleness in action mainly to his wife, mother or grandmother. It is we, therefore, the sisters, wives, mothers and grandmothers, that have to reflect on these problems and their solution and to make it impossible for the men to invoke our names as stumbling blocks to progress. How is this to be done? The answer is simple and unequivocal. It can only be done by a rapid and comprehensive programme of women's education whereby women might become effective social and political factors in the body politic, whereby they can help not only in the renaissance of Indian art and literature and Indian ideals but may be potent factors in social uplift.

#### Educational Progress.

Let us remember that the total number of women in all the schools and colleges in India from the Primary school up to the Arts and professional colleges was just over a million in the last year for which figures are available. And of this number, 86 per cent, stopped with the Primary school. All the influences which operate against the spread of education amongst the boys are reinforced in the case of women by the purdah system and the custom of early marriages. Experience of later years fortunately shows us that our men-folk have put, and will put, no serious obstacles in our path.

It is a pleasing feature of recent times that surmounting the difficulties and obstacles that lie ahead of them, Indian women have not only gained great distinction at the Universities and have become admirably qualified doctors and teachers but even the portals of the law courts have been invaded by a few who have taken to the profession of the Law. Great tribute is due to the pioneers of such educational and professional enterprises but it is not so much on isolated examples of eminent intellectual activity that the progress of this country depends but upon the early or unrather the immediate adoption of a

programme of compulsory education for women as well as men which would enable both of them to be equipped for the race of life which is daily growing more and more arduous and exacting.

To summarise the women's problem as I have envisaged it within recent times, women in the East as well as in the West have had to go through a period of struggle and endeavour to make their influence felt and their position recognized. Happily, there is a growing feeling throughout India in our favour, tardier perhaps than elsewhere, but indubitable; that unless the women can fight the battle of life side by side with men, it will never be won. The problem of Indian regeneration is mainly economic and social and the vindication of the economic rights of women and the social position of women are amongst the most important elements of the problem. Such vindication is dependent on the eschewing of obsolete ideas or outworn superstitions, and upon the realization of the value and the complete elimination firstly of the theory of the inferiority of the women on the part of the men and even more perhaps the elimination of the inferiority of the complex on the part of the women themselves. It is only as the result of the diffusion of education and the capacity to think independently and steadily that problems like the purdah, like child marriage, like child widowhood, like the dependent economic position of women in the family, can be solved. In all educational and social reforms and perhaps in all reforms including the political aspect of it, what matters is the will to succeed. The battle may to-day appear to be uncertain and pessimists may rejoice, but the fight against reaction and obscurantism once started is never lost. Great popular movements appear to be slow in progress because perhaps of their very mightiness and pervasiveness and as the poet said :

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking, Seem here no painful inch to gain,  
Far back, through creek and inlet making, Comes silent, flooding in the main.  
And not by eastern windows only, When day-light comes, in the light;  
In front, the sun climbs slow, how slowly, But westward, look, the land is bright.

### Resolutions.

The presidential address being over the Conference adjourned and met again on the next two days when it passed the following resolutions :—

#### 1.—Special Education Boards for Girls.

Mrs. P. K. Roy moved :—"In view of the deplorable state of education of girls in our country, this Conference is of opinion that Special Boards of Education for girls in every province should be constituted to regulate, supervise and control the education of women and that in particular immediate steps should be taken to make primary education free and compulsory."

#### 2.—Dowry System in Hindu Marriage.

Sm. Aparna Devi moved :—"This Conference considers that the marriage of girls should not be made the occasion for extorting money from the father by the bridegroom, but that whatever dowry may be given should be settled on the bride herself."

#### 3.—Indian Divorce Act.\*

Mrs. S. N. Roy moved the resolution :—"This Conference is in full sympathy with Sir Hari Singh Gour's Bill for the amendment of the Indian Divorce Act. It recommends that either this Act should be extended to the Hindu community or a similar enactment be passed for the dissolution of marriage amongst the Hindus.

"It further urges that a clause should be inserted in the Act to make it clear that men and women should have equal rights of guardianship of the children in case of divorce."

[\* Regarding this resolution a disclaimer was issued by Lady Abala Bose, Secretary, to the effect that Mrs. Roy's divorce resolution being not in the agenda should not be considered as a part of the proceedings of the Conference.]

#### Other Resolutions.

(4) "This Conference considers that in view of the existing anomalies regarding the status of women in the Hindu Law of Inheritance and in the disabilities suffered by them a thorough revision of this law is urgently needed."

(5) "This Conference considers that the existing laws relating to factories and workshops should be revived with a view to (a) the limiting of the working day of women to eight hours, (b) providing women medical officers and more sanitary facilities of them, also special consideration before and after child birth."

# The European Association.

The sixth Annual Conference of the European Association was held in Calcutta on Friday the 14TH DECEMBER, 1928, under the Presidency of Mr. O. B. Chartres.

The most important matter discussed at the morning session was the administration of Law and Order, Mr. Gavin Jones regretting that owing to some difference of opinion among the branches of the Association on this question the memorandum submitted to the Simon Commission could not make any definite statement.

The President, in opening the Conference, alluded to this question by saying that the opportunity afforded by the Conference should be used to try to obtain an agreed recommendation on the administration of Law and Order. Provinces were overwhelmingly against running the risk of handing over at present this administration to a Minister responsible to a Legislature.

Mr. Gavin JONES dealt at length with the subject. The question, he said, had troubled them a great deal, for they were faced with three alternatives against each of which there were objections. The alternatives were:—

The proposal that the police should be transferred to the Central Government.

That Law and Order should be entrusted to a Minister responsible only to the Autonomous Legislature.

That Law and Order should be the Portfolio of the Governor, who would have the right to certify expenditure under this head, and would appoint a permanent Secretary in the Legislature to answer the criticisms of the Legislature on questions of Law and Order.

The first alternative was impracticable. The Police Forces of the Provinces had to deal with the people in co-operation with the Executive. In India it would be impossible to control these services and co-operate with the Provincial Governments from Delhi and Simla. The second alternative to hand over Law and Order to a Minister controlled by an Autonomous Legislature as yet untried, was a dangerous step, and too rapid an advance in self-Government, unless and until it was certain the system of Parliamentary Government they were proposing for the Provinces was going to make for a stable Government. They could not take the risk of a Province relapsing into disorder by the undermining of the morale of the Police. A Minister in the Legislature was dependent on the votes of the members, and he would be subject to pressure from members, and perhaps colleagues in the Cabinet or by party Leaders and parties, in regard to appointments, transfers, dismissals, punishment and harassing details with which the head of this service was bound to be involved, unless pressure was resisted. The Police Force would deteriorate and when required for action would break in the hands of the Executive. This could only be avoided by a Minister who was not only strong enough to resist pressure himself, but could depend on the support of his colleagues in the Cabinet and a party strong enough to maintain that Cabinet in power.

After very careful consideration they came to the conclusion that in spite of any theoretical objections Law and Order must be reserved as a special portfolio for the Governor who would retain the power to certify expenditure under this head and would be represented by a Secretary in the Legislature. This opinion involved the continuation of a modified form of diarchy, which owing to the failure of the Montford Scheme had fallen into disrepute. The Montford Scheme failed not because of diarchy but because practically no responsibility was given to the Minister and the Legislature. The Legislature now did not control finance, and the Ministers depended on the support of the permanent official block and did not have to maintain their position by their own control of their party. The position would be entirely different under the new proposals.

The speaker reviewed the history of diarchy from the times of the Romans, adding that its weakness was that it could not be permanent.

"In India," he continued, "we have the great advantage that the autocratic side of our diarchical Government is based on the British democracy whose declared intention is gradually 'to develop Self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible Government'. So that diarchy is only a practical means of bridging the gulf during the process of the gradual development of self-governing institutions. After all, the division of the Government between the autocratic Central Government and the autonomous Provincial Legislature is a form of diarchy. I do not think we are making

a great sacrifice of theoretical principles of Government in proposing to maintain a modified form of diarchy by separating Law and Order from the control of the Provincial Legislatures.

"The problem of developing self-governing institutions in India is immense and is probably the greatest task ever undertaken by any nation. The present demand of politically minded India for self-Government, is the result of a century of education and contact with Europe and has only so far affected a very small percentage of the population of India. You cannot change the habits, customs and mental outlook of a people in a decade or even in a century."

Having reviewed the past history of India, ruled for centuries by Brahmins, throughout which the great mass of the people had remained unchanged, Mr. Gavin Jones went on—"This is the manner of people with whom we are endeavouring to establish democratic and self-governing institutions. Is it being unduly or unnecessarily cautious to reserve Law and Order until we see more clearly how democratic institutions are going to develop?" There were two dangers ahead if they attempted to push the development of self-governing institutions too rapidly. One was the lack of stability, which was essential to all good Government, and would lead to the weakening of the forces of Law and Order, and chaos. The other was the ascendancy of a narrow oligarchy, which would lead to revolution and disorder.

"As I understand the British Parliament," he concluded, "they have no intention of divesting themselves of the responsibility of ruling India to hand over to any oligarchy. Nor do they intend to allow India to lapse into disorder and chaos. Let us then move forward carefully step by step, but move forward somehow. Practical statesmanship will take cognisance of the difficulties, and will not risk a set-back by precipitating matters merely because a practical measure does not fulfil all our theoretical ideals."

Mr. TRAVERS said it was generally held upcountry that it would be seriously dangerous to hand over the administration of Law and Order to an Indian Minister so long as communal tension in Bengal remained as it was to-day. This was a most important point. People in Calcutta, perhaps, did not realize what communal tension meant, but he assured them, though there had been no riots of late in this Province, yet upcountry and in East Bengal especially, Hindus and Moslems were bitterly opposed and only awaited the emergence of some religious difficulty to light the fire that smoulders now. It would be dangerous to put either a Hindu or Moslem in charge of the police where there was the possibility of a communal riot taking place in the province in the next few years.

From both political and communal points of view it would mean a serious loss of police efficiency. They could not afford this. At present its efficiency depended only on the devoted services of the British and Indian officers and the support received from the Member-in-Charge of the Department. Without this support efficiency would be at once reduced. Conditions upcountry were vastly different from those in Calcutta where troops could be called in at a moment's notice.

Members representing Sylhet, Manbhum, Western Bengal, Bombay and Trichinopoly branches endorsed Mr. Travers' view. Summing up, the President pointed out that the Conference did not object to an Indian administering Law and Order, but they did object to making over the Department to a Minister responsible to a Legislature. This view was accepted by the Conference.

### The President's Speech.

At the outset of his speech Mr. Chartres welcomed the delegates, adding that the Conference was the most representative yet held, every Province in India—not excluding Burma—having sent one or more delegates. The subjects for discussion covered a wide range. They met at a time when India seemed to stand at the parting of ways. Events of no little significance had occurred since the last Conference. The Simon Commission, after a preliminary tour early in the year, had returned to India to continue its great task. The attempt of those who led the boycott of the Commission to show a united front proved such a failure, and the Commission was so flooded with memoranda from every responsible body in India, that even the boycotters deemed it well to try to arrive at an agreed set of recommendations which they took very good care to make public, in the form of what is known as the Nehru Report, so that while they could pretend to boycott, they knew their views would be available for consideration.

This was typical of the unreality that characterized much in Indian politics, continued Mr. Chartres. It must be obvious to everyone who had studied the working of the Simon Commission with its associated Central and Provincial Committees that it should be impossible to devise machinery better suited for sifting out the chaff from the grain in the Indian situation, and framing the best lines for the future constitution of the country.

Yet the men who called themselves India's leaders, instead of helping at this important stage of their country's political progress, spent their time in organizing demonstrations of immature youths, and imagined they were making an effect on the outside world. He rather suspected that the outside world knew as well as anybody the value at which to assess such tactics. The recent declaration of a social boycott of all those who dared to differ in opinion from those ardent soi-disant democrats threw a lurid light on the value that minorities could attach to the Fundamental Rights clause, of which so much was made in the Nehru Report.

The Report practically ignored the British connexion, though it was almost entirely to this connexion that modern India owed her present position as one of the leading trading nations of the world. The cynical way in which the authors referred to the vast British interests in India, coupled with their proposals to disenfranchise and deny representation to every European in the country, provided very real evidence of the necessity for the British to claim that when a new constitution was framed, full statutory and other safeguards for such interests must be provided in the Government of India Act.

The most useful feature of the Report was in the treatment of the communal question. All realized that as long as communal issues loomed more largely than national interests, the working of self-governing institutions in India was bound to be attended by grave—almost insuperable—difficulties. It would be interesting, therefore, to see if the solution advocated in the Nehru Report was supported by the important Indian parties and communities meeting here this month. The only possible cure for the canker of communalism was the creation of a feeling of security, but such feeling would never be established in India as long as her leaders had their heads in the clouds of political theories and lacked the courage to face the realities of the situation around their feet.

It was useless for the wild men who aimed at the immediate establishment of a Hindu oligarchy to talk of inherent rights and ignore the British connexion. British residents in India had inherent rights also, and were determined that any scheme of responsible Government should recognize those rights. They were quite willing, and desired to work with all these Indians who were prepared to work constructively for the welfare of India, many of whom had been dragooned into silence by the wild men who in the name of democracy, were endeavouring to form an oligarchy. These wild men—they would oppose relentlessly as it was obvious they were prepared to sacrifice the people and the country to gain their own personal ends.

For whom did these wild men speak? The majority of them came from Madras and Bengal. As regards Madras he was not well qualified to venture an opinion, but in Bengal he knew that while these men who claimed to be her leaders, and who inferred that they possessed the best brains in the Province, spent their time in talk, the trade and industries of the Province were falling more and more every day into the hands of non-Bengalis, who had little use for politics.

"In fact," said the President, "if you took the traditional figure of Nero, clothed him in "khaddar" and gave him a speaking trumpet instead of a fiddle, you would have a very true picture of Bengal to-day."

Consequently, these wild men represented few but themselves, which probably applied also in other Provinces, and unless they changed their tactics he was quite certain that the development of responsible Government in India would be retarded instead of accelerated by their actions. There were those who believed that British capital in India had made a recommendation for the transfer of Law and Order. This was not the case. The Associated Chambers had categorically denied that they made any recommendation on the subject. They had discussed theoretically the lines on which the problem could be dealt with, but they had not agreed on any definite line of action, recognizing the difficulty of reconciling theory and facts.

Sir Arthur FROOM said he had heard much said in favour of election through Union, Local and District Boards and he thought it was a scheme to be aimed at. But having regard to the situation of the country, he was of the opinion that it could not be put into working order for many years. There had been an entire lack of enthusiasm regarding Union Boards, and an absence of efficiency in working District Boards. Regarding this lack of efficiency, he did not think it was fair to blame the District Boards wholly. The introduction of the Reforms entirely altered the working of the Boards. In place of the official chairman who was the Collector or Deputy Commissioner, a non-official chairman was elected. The effect was to deprive the Boards of the official machinery which previously enabled the chairman to carry on the affairs of the district. In the present circumstances the chairman did not tour the Districts and consequently had very little knowledge of what was going on. In the old days the official chairman in the course of other duties toured the whole District,



The important matter of the services was dealt with by Mr. W. H. THOMPSON. He said that if the I.C.S., and the Indian Police Service disappeared to-day there would be Swaraj to-morrow. That would not happen, but it was necessary to face the fact. In the course of normal progress reservations and safeguards could only continue so long as the services retained their British character.

### Resolutions.

The General Secretary moved that "this Conference accords its fullest support to the Memorandum submitted by the Council to the Indian Statutory Commission."

This resolution, said Col. CRAWFORD, was the most important on the agenda calling for unanimous approval. It had been his duty to put into form the opinions and views forwarded to the Central Administration by the various branches. He admitted that the responsibility of the task weighed heavily. The European Community in India was faced with the biggest crisis in its history, and yet its individual members, particularly in the large cities, appeared unaware of the issues at stake.

There could be no doubt of the whole-hearted acceptance of the policy of Great Britain laid down in the declaration of 1917, or of a readiness to bring that policy to fruition, and equally no doubt that intimate experience of Indian conditions had made them alive to the difficulties in the way. That was the spirit underlying the Memorandum. It was in that spirit they urged the underpinning of the top-heavy structure set up by Mr. Montagu by the development of the arts of local self-Government, in the village, Union and District Boards, and in municipalities,—which must accompany any further development of Provincial and Central Legislatures.

The real problem under examination was India's peaceful political progress and it was with reluctance that they were compelled to call attention to sectional interests. They would be content if they could be certain of a reasonable standard of administration, and above all of justice, under any changed form of government. They had looked, with no small anxiety, for any gesture from the political leaders of India that the rights of minorities, and of the European minority in particular, would be rigorously and justly protected. No such gesture had been forthcoming. On the contrary, they had been submitted to a campaign of calumny and hatred which left them under no misapprehension as to the treatment they were likely to receive. They had not any desire that European necessities should hinder the successful solution of that wider problem of India's development. At the same time they were forced to recognize the position and to impress upon the Indian Statutory Commission and Parliament the fact that advance must not be secured by injustice to minorities or by the sacrifice of legitimate interests. It was on these grounds they would press for the provision of adequate safeguards.

One of the most important points they had made in the Memorandum was that the Central Government should remain predominantly British. The Government of India was conducted by men each of whom belonged to the cadre of some province or another and had his early experience in his own province. Now and again a man was brought out from home to a particular post as Sir Basil Blackett was, but it was impossible to run the Government of India by men recruited *ad hoc* from home. They must know India and they could only know India by having had district experience. They could not, therefore, support a suggestion which would leave the men of experience in the provinces bound only by short term agreements with ministers and the Central Government with no claim on their services.

"This Conference considers that political development in India must be along the lines of responsible Government as an integral part of the British Empire, and while this Conference is not prepared to say that responsible Government on British lines is suitable to Indian conditions it agrees that this system of Government should be given the fullest possible trial commensurate with a recognition of these conditions".

Speaking on the resolution, Col. SMILES said that a strong Central Government must remain in India with full control of the Army, foreign relations and similar other subjects. Self-Government must begin in the provinces first, but some modifications must be made. The British constitution had its faults and it should not be slavishly imitated. Although he was in general agreement with the memorandum submitted to the Commission, he was not sure that a Second Chamber would be suitable for a province like Assam, because they had not the proper men for that purpose. In Assam an Administrative Court on the lines of Switzerland would be far more efficient than a Second Chamber. The Court would probably consist of three members nominated by the local Government and appointed by the Central Government. A Second Chamber might be suitable for Bengal, Bombay, Madras and other major provinces. The alternative to an administrative court was the Governor's veto, and whatever the Governor's veto might be, it was not

responsible Government, but going back to the ills of dyarchy. The Governor should be outside and inside the Government machine. If they kept the Governor outside the administration, he could be a friend of all parties and act as the real representative of the King. The resolution was carried.

Mr. W. H. THOMPSON moved that "this Conference deplores the increase of racial and communal antagonism and it views with grave anxiety the increasing irresponsibility of some sections of the Press in India."

He said that if the communal problem in India could be solved, much of the anxiety for the future which existed would disappear. The whole population was divided into water-tight compartments and so long as this system of society continued, all the animosities had little chance of being forgotten. And yet with this most inflammatory state of society in India, they had a section of the Press which appeared to be entirely without a sense of responsibility for what it said, whose chief delight appeared to be to publish matter likely to put up race against race and community against community. The resolution was carried.

Mr. C. G. COOPER moved that "this Conference views with considerable anxiety the present and future stages of European education in India and is of opinion that the problem can be best examined and co-ordinated by making it a reserved subject under the Central Government."

Mr. Cooper declared that the question of education of the Domiciled and Anglo-Indian Community became daily of increasing importance, and it was essentially a question which the Europeans in India should watch. The existing education arrangements for the European were entirely unsatisfactory and inadequate due to shortage of finance and inefficient teaching staff, whilst in the great majority of cases the material turned out was deplorable. The resolution was adopted.

The Conference then discussed a number of resolutions relating to the internal organization of the Association after which it adjourned.

## The Viceroy at the Association's Dinner.

The annual dinner of the European Association was held in Calcutta on the 17TH DECEMBER 1928. H. E. the Viceroy, who was the most distinguished guest invited on the occasion, delivered a most amazing speech in the course of which he said:—

"I have read with interest the memorandum recently presented by your Association to the Statutory Commission, in which you graphically describe the community you represent as the direct descendants of the English merchants, who in 1612 settled at Surat under a *farman* from the Moghal Court, later on in Madras, and then in Bombay and in Calcutta. You have in truth a great history, great traditions and a great experience behind you, and I remember that when I was your guest here two years ago I spoke of the special contribution which the members of your Association could bring to the political life of India, a contribution such as India can, I think, find from no other quarter.

"I hardly thought then that, when I next met your Association, we should find ourselves in the midst of an inquiry, which is fraught with such momentous consequences to the future of India; and I recognize in the memorandum to which I have alluded the proofs of the careful thought and study, which have gone to the preparation of your comprehensive document. I am sure that all sober-minded citizens of India must have witnessed with regret, and will condemn, the continued attempts to conduct unmannerly and offensive demonstrations against the Commission and their Indian colleagues. I can understand the attitude of those who following the hitherto established tradition of boycott, prefer to hold themselves rigidly aloof from the Commission's investigation. I have often expressed my view that such a policy is mistaken and short-sighted, and ill-designed to convince Parliament of the justice of India's claim. But to substitute for this policy of abstention the procedure of noisy and dangerous public demonstration against the chosen representatives of Parliament and their colleague is to exchange what might have been a dignified protest of responsible persons for the methods of disorderly disturbance of a mob.

"The Commission and Indian Committees are discharging a function, which has been laid upon them by duly constituted authority, and which must involve for many great personal sacrifice. And the first and the most difficult lesson that citizens of any actual or potential democracy have to learn is to train themselves to believe that people with whom they disagree may be guided by motives not less worthy than their own.

"The experience of the last two or three weeks makes it quite plain that, however much those who organize such demonstrations may themselves deprecate violence, they

are when it comes to the point often quite incapable of controlling the forces they have excited even where they are not themselves anxious, as has been the case on one or two occasions, to make active trouble. What is advertised as a peaceful demonstration may rapidly become something very different, and those so crude, so senseless, and so dangerous—whatever the object they may mistakenly desire to serve—incur a very heavy responsibility. In such circumstances it is the plain duty of Government to take whatever steps it deems necessary to prevent the recurrence of these discreditable incidents.

"The Commission wisely guided by Sir John Simon has already made it plain that it has no other desire but to render a faithful account to Parliament of India's aspirations, and of the conditions under which it is sought to bring these to fruition. They are fortunate in having the assistance of colleagues from India, among whom one of your representatives, Sir Arthur Froom has all the qualities requisite to make him a worthy representative of European interests. It would obviously be out of place for me at this stage to venture an opinion either on your memorandum, or on any of the many other valuable papers which have been prepared by official and nonofficial bodies or by individuals. That as you have suggested, would be perilously near contempt of court, and I have too great a respect for Sir John Simon's talents to be willing to risk being prosecuted by him on this or on any other charge. But I know that your views will receive the close attention they deserve, and I can promise you that for my part I shall always give them full and sympathetic consideration.

"Constitution-making must always be a delicate task and no two people are likely to find themselves in agreement on every point. But at any rate a constitution must be made to fit the facts, and is not a thing to be laid down *a priori* in the hope that the facts will somehow or other fit themselves in behind. And, as you say in your memorandum, there is nothing to be gained—in fact everything to be lost by minimizing the difficulties inherent in the problem.

"There is, however, everything to be gained by facing those difficulties in mutual effort and with the will to solve them, and I take pleasure in acknowledging the assurance, with which your memorandum closes, of the genuine good-will of the British community towards India's political progress. There is no use pretending that the different classes, the different communities, the different races in India will not have different interests and different standards. But in such disagreement there is nothing unhealthy or unnatural.

"If interests clash, it does not mean that one set of interests is to be swept away or that one community need smother its individuality to suit the whole. Each has its own good qualities, its own ideals to pursue, its own function to perform, its own rights to maintain. But each should be capable of self-realization in its own sphere, and at the same time of taking its own place in the whole scheme of the national life.

"You, Sir, have referred to the movement recently undertaken in certain quarters in India on behalf of the policy of complete and total independence, and I notice that it has been officially asserted by a recognized political organization that India can enjoy no liberty unless and until the British connexion is entirely severed. Both your Governor and the Governor of the United Provinces have recently made certain observations on this subject with which I found myself in complete agreement and to which I need add but little.

"Indian Nationalists have constantly attacked, condemned or misrepresented those whom they alleged through excessive caution to be adopting an unfriendly attitude towards India's aspirations. I make bold to say that the most bitter and confirmed reactionary would never have it in his power to inflict one-tenth of the damage upon India's cause that it is likely to suffer at the hands of its false friends, who would guide it towards the morass of independence.

"If it is necessary, as it clearly is, for India to raise her national life on a foundation of true national unity, what greater disservice can any person render to her than by bending all their energies to destroy that which is to-day the principal factor of unity throughout the Indian peninsula.

"Of the unifying influences that make for nationhood, I make bold to say that most important in the life of India to-day, viewed as a single entity, are these: first, she is a geographic unit, all parts of which it may be said share a broad economic interest. Secondly, and more powerful, is the common loyalty to the Person and Throne of the King-Emperor. During these latter days we have been able to measure the affection which binds the King-Emperor to the hearts of all his people, as from every quarter of his dominions thoughts have turned together in sympathy, anxiety and prayer to his long struggle with an exhausting illness.

"And as that loyalty is the bond of union between the several people of different

countries, so in India it is shared by Hindu and Moslem, Brahman and non-Brahman, Punjabi and Madrassi, British India and Indian States. Destroy that, and you have, by violating the most cherished sentiment of millions; erected an enduring and insuperable barrier to the achievement of a free Indian nationhood. Truly then could India say that her wounds were those with which she was wounded in the house of her friends.

"It is not difficult to forecast what must be the reaction upon British opinion of this assertion of independence as the goal of a great political party, by persons who would claim the title of responsible politicians. Those in Great Britain who sympathise most warmly with the ideal of India attaining at the earliest possible moment the status of any of the other great Dominions of the Crown, will find the ground cut from under their feet if British opinion ever becomes convinced, as some apparently are now endeavouring to convince it, that the so-called Dominion Status was only valued by India as a stepping-stone to a complete severance of her connexion with the British Commonwealth.

"From the point of view, therefore, alike of the effect upon Indian unity, and public opinion of Great Britain, I can feel no doubt that the demand for independence must do an irreparable injury to India's cause, and sadden the hearts of the wiser of India's sons and friends. Is it too much to hope that on an issue of this kind, which is too grave to be resolved by verbal formulas or mental reservations those who can appreciate the implications and issue of such a policy, should in unequivocal terms warn their countrymen against it?

"But it is not only on the political side of her life that India is at present invited to follow the advice of evil counsellors. You have just referred, Mr. President, to the grave damage recently wrought by industrial strife, and to the particular aspect of it which lately has been the most disturbing of all,—I mean the part which Communist activities have taken in its promotion.

"The implications of such a philosophy in India are not remote. India as much as, or perhaps more than, any country in the world has constructed her life upon the framework of property and social custom and distinction. There are no doubt many respects in regard to all these, where a more enlightened opinion is seeking, and will more and more insist upon, reform. But reform is one thing and revolution is another; and let no man be under any delusion as to the price India would pay in her inherited and traditional life for such a revolution if it were ever unhappily effected within her boundaries.

"Now your Association—as all others which have a stake in the orderly progress of Indian life—cannot afford to be unconcerned with any such threats to the stability of established institutions, and as you have remarked, this question has recently been engaging the serious attention of the Government. And, but for the very human lapse to which you have referred, certain legislation on the subject would have been carried through the Assembly last session.

"But of course I agree with you, Mr. President, as to the importance of the Leader of the House keeping in the closest touch with the elements which are prepared to give general support to the Government in the House, and I can assure you that the present Home Member will be anxious to do everything he can to establish and maintain this contact. Legislation, however, can treat only the symptoms and will not of itself remove the root cause of the disease. For communism takes its origin in social conditions, and will always find out the weak spot in which to flourish as noxious weeds will readily find the soil best suited to their growth. And as it will generally find its attack easiest on crowded industrial populations, it is here we have to make our first stand against it.

"Communism will not hesitate to manufacture grievances where they do not exist, but unless it can lay its finger on real injustice it is not likely to succeed. And much can be done in any country to counter such an attack by employers keeping in close personal touch with those they employ, and seeing that their wages and conditions of life are reasonable. If we are to fight communism successfully, it will be by employers and Governments giving cause to the masses to believe that they—and not communists—are the true friends of labour.

"We must make it plain that even the most philanthropic Communist that ever sought to loose the whirlwind of revolution, enjoys no monopoly of the desire to improve conditions, and that progressive employers can offer a more excellent way by which this may be accomplished. From this point of view, if from no other, it is the duty of all employers, whether public or private, to remember that the workman is a human being, both before he enters the factory and after he leaves it, and that only the industrial system, which is careful always to recognize this human side of its business, can expect to meet with confidence the challenge of these disruptive influences.

# The Indian Chambers of Commerce

H. E. the Viceroy opened on the 28th DECEMBER 1928 the second annual meeting of the Federation of the Indian Chambers of Commerce in the Dalhousie Institute, Calcutta. Among those present were the Governor of Bengal, Sir B. N. Mitra, Sir George Rainy, Nawab Nawab Ali Chaudhury, Sir P. C. Mitter, the Raja of Nashipur, the Raja of Santosh, the Maharaja of Mymensingh, Mr. S. N. Haji, Sir Devaprasad Sarbadhikari, Mr. K. C. Neogy, Mr. Shanmukham Chetti, Mr. B. E. G. Eddis, Mr. H. Graham, Mr. D. P. Khaitan, Mr. W. R. Prentice and Mr. P. Mukerjee.

## Viceroy's opening Speech.

Sir Purushottamdas Thakurdas invited the Viceroy to open the proceedings His Excellency the Viceroy in opening the Federation, said :

Mr. President and gentlemen,—I know that I am speaking not only for myself but for the other members of my Government who are here to-day when I give expression to the pleasure we feel at being present at the deliberations of this conference.

As you have said, Mr. President, this Federation is still in its infancy and I heartily welcome the formation of an organisation which will express the considered and authoritative views of Indian Commercial and industrial interests and facilitate consultation with the Government on all matters affecting the economic welfare of India. In a vast country like this, it must frequently happen that measures which are pressed on the Government by such interests in one part of the country may be economically disadvantageous to the other parts and it is clearly therefore the more important that representatives from all quarters should meet together in an organisation, such as you have formed and learn to give and take in evolving a common policy for India's economic prosperity. This diversity of conditions is reflected to some extent in the present trade outlook, for although the progress of Indian trade is now generally more favourable there are clouds over the rice, coal and cotton trades which darkens the picture.

## FOREIGN MARKETS FOR INDIAN PRODUCE.

Your President has referred to certain difficulties from which Indian trade is now suffering and some of these, as he has said, are caused by the low prices which the Indian produce obtains in the markets of the world. This, no doubt, is due in some cases to defective methods of marketing, but it would hardly be correct to say that the Royal Commission on Agriculture has overlooked this point, for it has devoted an important chapter to the subject. The views and recommendations of the Commission are receiving the careful attention of the Government of India and of the Local Governments : but the root of the whole matter appears to be this, that there is no incentive to the primary producer to improve the quality of his produce unless he is sure of an adequate premium for the improved quality. Quality is receiving increased attention in the world's market and commands substantially higher prices. Indian trades can give a powerful impetus to the improved production by passing on a fair premium to the primary producer, and may thereby do much to increase the wealth of India generally and of the agricultural classes in particular on whose prosperity, as Sir Purshottamdas has said, the prosperity of the commercial and industrial classes depends.

The Agricultural Commission has stressed the value of forming organisations on the lines of the Indian Central Cotton Committee on which your President has played so important a part. The success of any such organisation must depend primarily on the initiative and energy of the trade to finance its organisations by

undertaking at its instance legislation to impose a cess. Such an organisation need not be limited to trades dealing in agricultural produce. We have recently consulted the Chambers on a proposal to impose such a cess on hides, and it has been decided to appoint a small committee under the chairmanship of Dr. Meek, the Director-General of Commercial Intelligence, to examine the details. It is satisfactory too that the Indian Mining Federation should be contemplating an organisation financed by a cess to improve the production and popularise the use of domestic coke and should be making an active endeavour to face the difficulties from which the coal industry is suffering.

#### APPOINTMENT OF TRADE COMMISSIONERS.

But trade organisations in India, if they are to be fully effective, require adequate representation abroad where their principal markets are, who can furnish them with continuous and up-to-date information on the standards of quality demanded, fluctuations in prices, tariffs and trade regulations and other matters of importance to the Indian Exporter, and who can effect trade introductions and smoothen the way for Indian merchants visiting those countries and who can investigate the potentialities of wider markets and opportunities for extending Indian trade. Indian merchants have not always agencies on whom they can rely in other countries, and here is a gap which can be at least partially filled by the appointment of Trade Commissioners. Mr. Lindsay and his assistants, Mr. Gupta and Mr. Asli, besides the valuable work they have done in England, have also been preparing the way for the location of permanent offices in other parts of Europe, and Sir Atul Chatterji, who has already done much for Indian commerce during the tenure of his present office, has submitted proposals for the appointment of Trade Commissioners at Hamburg, Milan and New York.

#### RECENT MISSION TO THE NEAR EAST.

You will remember too that a commercial mission visited the Near East and Africa in the early part of this year; and in the course of their valuable report they have recommended the appointment of Trade Commissioners at Alexandria, Mombassa and Durban. These recommendations are now under review. I should like to take this opportunity of acknowledging the cordial welcome that our mission received in South Africa and all the other countries they visited.

This mission, as you know, originated in the report of the Tariff Board on the Cotton Textile Industry, which laid emphasis on the fact that the development of an export trade was a matter of vital importance to the Bombay Mill Industry. For many months this industry has been passing through difficult times. Production in Bombay has been stopped by labour troubles, and the output of cotton manufactures in India as a whole has consequently been seriously reduced. It is a striking fact that in spite of this fall in the production, imports of cotton goods have been actually less for the first six months of this year than in the corresponding period of last year. The inability of foreign manufacturers to increase or even maintain their imports into India, when production in Bombay had almost ceased, suggests that the Bombay industry would not be assured of finding salvation by raising prices for the consumer through protective duties, and that the remedy must be sought elsewhere. The remedy is surely co-operation between the employer and the labour to reduce the cost of production here and in some other industries.

#### LABOUR UNREST.

India is reaching the stage when labour can economically earn the wages that it properly demands in order to raise its standard of living, only by more efficient work. Indian industry can only hold its own against world competition by a combined effort, an effort by employers to reduce the overhead charges and by labour to increase the efficiency of its work. In addressing an audience of business men, many of whom are large employers, I need make no apology for alluding to the conditions of industrial labour. India has not, of course, any more than other countries, been free from labour unrest in the past; but all of us must have observed with great concern and regret the outbreak and continuance of labour troubles all over the country which has been so marked a feature. It is difficult

for me to lay sufficient emphasis upon the appalling waste of resources, the set-back to general prosperity, the suffering and privations of the innocent, the dangerous passions of class-hatred and mob-violence which are the inevitable outcome of a series of conflicts between the employer and the employed such as have disfigured the industrial record of the present year in India. When I say that it has been reliably stated that, in the first nine months of 1928, at least 30 million working days have been lost owing to trade disputes and that the total loss in wages only on this score has been estimated at the gigantic figure of  $4\frac{1}{2}$  crores of rupees, I am still taking no account of the vastly greater losses of the employers of labour which in the Bombay mill strike alone have been computed at no less than 15 crores of rupees. It is easy to picture to one-self what all this means when translated into privations of women and children, the ruin of family life and the arousing of passions which it is easier to set loose than to control.

The organisation of labour for its legitimate purpose is always to be welcomed but if that organisation is to be merely a weapon in the hands of men whose thoughts are often directed less to the true welfare of the labouring classes than to disturbance for unworthy ends, it is likely only to become a danger and menace to society, instead of a source of strength to its own members. I would earnestly ask you to consider whether there is any action which you as employers and we as Government can take to prevent the recurrence of such a situation. The conditions under which Indian industrial labourers work have come in for some severe criticism recently on the part of observers from outside. I am far from suggesting that all the comments of our temporary visitors have been justified or made with a fair sense of proportion and appreciation of the difficulties peculiar to this country; but an impartial survey of the recent happenings in the industrial world has made me feel that we must all be prepared to join hands in the search for remedies that may promise relief from the present state of affairs.

#### NEED FOR FINDING REMEDIES.

We shall agree that a feeling of discontent and of injustice, if it exists, provides just the soil and atmosphere necessary for the professional agitator, and for the even more insidious activities of those who, for reasons of their own, aim at the break-up of the existing order of society. That such persons have been at work during the past year, we all know. I am asking you to day to co-operate with me in exploring means of action to meet their operations by removing, so far as lies within our power, the conditions which provide them with their opportunity, because here I feel sure that you as employees and we as Government can co-operate. For instance, we have recently placed before the country proposals which are designed to facilitate enquiry into and settlement of trade disputes by impartial tribunals; but the setting up of such machinery will not in itself be sufficient to eliminate industrial conflicts. It must be supplemented by action on the part both of employers and workers. In England, for example, much has been done to prevent disputes coming to a head, through machinery set up within trades and industries by employers and workers themselves, so that the Government machinery for enquiry and settlement is regarded as the last line of defence, the final court of appeal, to which in extreme cases only reference should be made. I have mentioned this specially as one example of the way in which more direct relations might be established between employers and labour.

#### CONTACT BETWEEN EMPLOYER AND EMPLOYEE.

Since I came to India I have been impressed by the fact that in some of the organised industries here, the workman seems to be separated from the employer to a degree which is unknown in England. I recognise that this is no doubt the result, to some extent, of factors over which employers have little or no control, such as the illiteracy of the workmen, and in many cases the brevity of the period which he is prepared to devote to industrial pursuits. But, it seems to me that there may be other obstacles, more susceptible of removal, which come between employers and those for whose welfare they are responsible, and that possibly by the reduction in some cases of intermediaries or perhaps by other methods, more direct relations might be established.

In other matters also, I suggest that we have something to learn from other countries. India, from the point of view of industry, is comparatively speaking, a young country, and we have therefore an exceptional opportunity of profiting by the experience of others. I am not suggesting that all the measures which have been found successful elsewhere can automatically be applied to Indian conditions ; but I do believe that there is here a wide and fruitful field which has not yet been thoroughly explored.

During the last five or six years, India has made considerable progress in labour legislation. Most of our important acts, such as the Factories and Mines Acts, have been entirely remodelled, and others, such as the Trade Unions Act and the Workmen's Compensation Act are new. But in the field of labour legislation great advances have been made in recent years in Western countries, and new ideas and new methods are being constantly canvassed and examined and we in India may still benefit from their experience before we rest satisfied that our existing legislation is entirely adequate and suitable. In our consideration of these important matters, I have no doubt that we shall be able to count upon your assistance and that you will readily give us the benefit of your great experience.

#### BRITISH AND THE INDIAN COMMERCE.

As you, Sir, have said, the development of Indian commerce and industry is intimately connected with the national movement. The ideal of making the Indian nation united, prosperous and progressive is one with which every Britisher should sympathise ; for such an ideal is the natural issue and fulfilment of everything that Great Britain has tried and is trying to do in India. But at times anxiety to reach this ideal tempts some to accept an economic outlook which seems to be narrower than what world experience suggests. Legislative short cuts are dangerous weapons to use in these days of increasing economic inter-action between all parts of the world, and may very easily do more harm than good to the cause they are meant to serve. You have referred, Mr. President, to the inter-action of British and Indian commercial interests. It is, I think, almost a truism to say that Indian commerce and industry will only make good by a constructive effort in which British commercial interests, we may be sure, when fairly approached, will not be slow to co-operate. As you Sir have told us, such co-operation is even now not rare. Thanks, indeed, largely to the efforts of Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas himself, in the great cotton industry, Indian and British business men are already working harmoniously together for the common end of the Indian Central Cotton Committee, the East India Cotton Association and the Bombay Mill-Owners' Association.

We find other recent instances of co-operation in the formation of an Indian Accountancy Board, the proposals for which have been worked out by an informal committee of prominent Indian and British Accountants with the assistance of the Commerce Department and also in the unanimous recommendations of the Indian Road Development Committee under the Chairmanship of Mr. Jayakar, which included members of all parties in the legislature, the European group as well as the Congress Party, Nationalists, Independents and Muslims and the Government.

I sincerely welcome, Sir, your hope that the time will come when Indian and British Commerce and Industry, will work gladly together without distinction of race or creed.

#### COASTAL TRAFFIC RESERVATION.

You have referred, Sir, to the Coastal Reservation Bill which was before the Assembly last Session. The position of the Government has been repeatedly made plain on this matter, and in view of the fact that the Bill is now in the Select committee, though I thought it right to restate the broad position of Government in regard to it, I have not thought it proper to enter into detailed consideration of its provisions. I am more concerned, if I can, to induce British and Indian opinion to join in searching out a solution that might reconcile the conflicting points of view. There are, however, two things I would say on the subject. The future of the Indian Mercantile Marine depends primarily on the success of the "Dufferin" and of the supplementary arrangements which the Government are now making to train Indians as marine engineers and as wireless operators. It was said by the



maker of the greatest maritime power in Ancient Greece that it is men, not walls or ships that make a city ; and in modern times the experience of countries that have tried to create a mercantile marine have shown that everything depends on personnel. I cannot bring myself to believe that an Indian Mercantile Marine will be created merely by legislative action to transfer the profits of the coastal trade, which appears to give only a moderate return of the Capital invested from British to Indian shareholders. It is the training of personnel that I believe to be fundamental to the whole matter. In this vital matter, ungrudging assistance and support are being given by British interests. British ship-owners are active members of the governing body of the "Dufferin." British ship-builders have willingly agreed to take Indians as apprentices in marine engineering in their yards. The Marconi Company is preparing a scheme for training Indians as wireless operators. It is essential for the future of the Indian Mercantile Marine that this sympathetic interest should be maintained.

In the second place, it is not infrequently said that there is a precedent for this bill in other parts of the Empire and that Australia in particular has reserved her coastal trade in the manner that is now proposed for India ; but any one who has read the relevant sections of the Australian Navigation Act must be aware that they relate only to personnel and that their object is to secure that Australian seamen employed in the coasting trade will receive as good wages as Australian workers employed on shore. So far is it from being true that the Australian coasting trade is reserved for Australian-owned ships, that the Australian United Steam Navigation Company, which is engaged in the Australian coasting trade, is actually financed exclusively by British capital and is controlled by a London Board of Directors. There is indeed no precedent in the British Empire, nor so far as I know in any other country or empire for legislation which would reserve the coastal trade for any one class or race of citizens. India, in her relations with parts of the Empire, has always stood for equal economic opportunity for all classes or races of His Majesty's subjects, and I can hardly believe that any proposal which is inconsistent with this principle will be to the interest of or secure the approval of the people of India.

I have already stated that the ambition to create an Indian Mercantile Marine is one with which I have every sympathy ; but I would venture to assert that co-operation and not discrimination is the best means of bringing it to fruition. A drastic reversal of the principles on which the commerce of the world is based, is not likely in the long run to be either a reasonable or an effective substitute for fair competition.

It is no doubt true as you have said, Mr. President, that the Government of India and Indian commercial interests do not always see eye to eye. I fancy that there are other spheres of the great and varied life of India of which the same thing could be said ; and indeed if it were otherwise, the Government would be no Government, for it is impossible to please all of the time. It has therefore been a great satisfaction to me to meet your representatives here and to learn from you, Sir, how you see the various problems for which it must be our joint effort to find a satisfactory solution.

The commerce and industry of a country are its very life-blood, and their prosperity reacts quickly and surely on the welfare of every individual citizen. Any Government worthy of the name will realise that one of its duties is to foster and strengthen its commercial life by any means that lie within its power, and it cannot but be grateful for the advice and frank criticism of representative bodies such as the Federated Chambers of Commerce.

In conclusion, gentlemen, let me once again assure you of the pleasure I have felt in coming among you this morning, and of the warm interest I take and shall continue to take in the welfare of your organisation.

#### The Presidential Address.

In course of his presidential address Sir Purushottamdas Thakurdas said :—  
Indian trade and industry have a long and ancient history. Their importance was recognised and the mercantile community was an integral part of Indian polity, from the earliest time. Since the advent of British Rule, however, foreign trade

has tended to bulk more, and to engage a larger measure of official interest, than the indigenous commerce and industry. Indian thinkers for over a generation have felt that the fiscal and economic policies of the Government require to be adapted to the economic needs and conditions of the country and the germ of the present movement is to be found in their writings and speeches. The most prominent names in this school of thinkers, which I recall with gratitude, are Dadabhai Nowroji, Romesh Chunder Dutt and Ranade ; two of these were the first originators of the Swadeshi movement, which for many years remained in a latent state until it gained strength on the Partition of Bengal in 1905.

#### HISTORY OF THE MOVEMENT.

This brief review of the history of this movement is necessary to understand that Indian commerce and industry are intimately associated with, and are, indeed, an integral part of the national movement—growing with its growth and strengthening with its strength. Much misunderstanding is due to this important fact not being sufficiently recognised. The ideal of the national movement in the political sphere, namely to make the Indian nation united, prosperous and progressive, is also the ideal of Indian commerce and industry in the economic sphere. Many of our European friends and even some Indians do not realise that, deprived of its inspiration in Indian nationalism, Indian commerce and industry might be reduced to mere exploitation. The attitudes of the Indian commercial world to Government and British commercial interests can be rightly appreciated only if this great fact is understood. Indian commerce and industry cannot make terms with the one or the other at the expense of national interests. At the same time peace and order, security of person and property, are in India, as elsewhere, the first requirements of commercial and industrial well-being ; and Government may count upon the support of Indian commerce to every well-considered measure having for its object the promotion of these prime interests.

#### INDO-BRITISH CO-OPERATION.

I look forward to the time when the distinction between Indian and British in the commerce and industry of the country will disappear, and both British and Indian industrialists and business men will work harmoniously together in promoting the economic well-being of the country. Such co-operation even now is not rare, and it is bound to grow as Englishmen in India understand that Indian leaders have no predatory intentions, and that in a self-governing India, British interests will be as secure as at the present day. They should recognise, however, that Indians have the same right to a predominant share in the commerce and industry of their country, as other nationals have in their countries, and should not misinterpret their attempts to obtain it as an attack upon British interests in India. One sometimes hears of claims to a stake in the country computed in terms of amounts of British capital invested. I cannot help thinking that arguments against our national aspirations based on such claims are derogatory to the high plane on which the relations between Britain and India should always rest. Otherwise, it is not difficult to argue on the other side, that, even in terms of money, Britain has recovered from this country much more than the amount of British capital invested in India, and that after all the stake of the Indian Merchants in India is very considerably larger, in fact many thousand times larger. But the relation between the two countries must be decided by higher considerations and on broader grounds than those of rupees annas and pises.

#### SCIENTIFIC MARKETING.

There is one point which has perhaps been overlooked by the Agricultural Commission—or which was possibly beyond its scope—namely, the price which Indian raw material secures in the markets of the world. There are many directions in which Indian interests can be better safeguarded and Indian raw materials be given fairer valuation in these markets than at present. As Your Excellency knows, the Agricultural Department of the United States of America by passing the Cotton Standards Act in 1923 compelled the whole world to trade in American cotton on no other standards except those prepared by that Department for American cotton. The Act imposes heavy penalties (up to six months' imprison-

ment) on any American citizen buying, selling, either quoting or receiving, quotations based on any standards other than those of the United States of America. The cotton trade of the whole world has more or less been compelled to fall in a line with this. The latest information from America is that American shippers have been successful in securing the establishment at Bremen, Havre, Rotterdam, Ghent and Brussels of super Appeal Boards or Committees by which all disputes regarding the quality, etc., of American cotton will be decided. On these Committees the American shippers are represented equally with European buyers of American cotton. No unwarranted running down of the raw material of America is thus risked, and this somewhat exceptional measure has been successful only because the cotton trade of America has behind it the whole-hearted support of the Government of the United States of America, who are actuated by the ideals of increasing the reputation and good name of American cotton and securing a fair price to its growers. I do not pretend that Indian raw material is, in every respect, exported in the most perfect condition but it cannot be claimed, either, that American cotton is marketed in such a satisfactory state as to be incapable of improvement. At the moment, the Indian shipper has no voice in the cotton exchanges; or for the matter of that in any exchanges, where Indian raw materials are traded in, in any part of the world. I may say that even in India the Central Government have not yet been able to devise uniform standards for trading in the same variety of cotton all over the country. Regarding the export of jute which is the monopoly of India, and a necessity of the world, the commercial Sale Rooms of London where the jute business is transacted, if they keep any nationals from their precincts, they keep out Indians. There are other Sale Rooms in London which definitely refuse to take Indians as their members. I mention this in order that Your Excellency may realise in correct perspective, the feelings with which Indians who see those conditions in foreign countries return here owing to such handicaps. I am sure that if the Government of India took some interest in removing these handicaps on Indians, they would not have to work long in securing us redress. I need hardly add that such a step, when achieved, will materially assist the Indian grower in several directions. It would help against an unwarranted lowering of the value and reputation of Indian raw materials in world markets, and would further facilitate the marketing of Indian produce abroad.

#### COAST L. BILL.

One legislative measure which was before the Assembly at Simla last September has called for more criticism than usual—I refer to the Coastal Reservation Bill. Responsible British commercial representatives allege that the Bill, as drafted, is nothing short of a measure of “expropriation.” As the Bill is at present in the most important stage of all, namely, the Select Committee stage, I will not say anything more than that it is for the European commercial representatives on the Select Committee of the Assembly to convince the other members of the Select Committee of this undesirable aspect of the Bill.

The country notes with satisfaction the beginning made under Your Excellency's Government for the training of Indian boys as officers on the “Dufferin.” During the last sixty years for which the British Companies have had the practical monopoly of Indian Coastal Trade, not only has the slightest chance or opportunity not been afforded to Indians to be trained or to serve as officers or engineers on their ships, but all possible means have been employed by the vested interests to prevent Indians from participating in the vast carrying trade of this country. The Indian commercial community also continuously had reason to complain of the comparatively scant attention which their requirements have received at the hands of the non-Indian companies. Moreover, what the Bill aims at is no more than what is or has been, for many years, the law in practically all the maritime countries of the world, not even excluding several parts of British Empire; and it must be remembered that what is being complained against so bitterly is one of the recommendations of the Indian Mercantile Marine Committee appointed by the Government of India about five years ago.

In proposing a vote of thanks to His Excellency the Viceroy Mr. G. D. Birla said that he hoped a new chapter so auspiciously opened would bring

the Government of the country into closer relations with the mercantile opinion of the country. Mr. Birla also thanked the Governor, after which the Federation adjourned for lunch.

### Proceedings and Resolutions

#### CONDOLENCE

On the Federation reassembling in the afternoon on the motion of the Chairman, it recorded its grief at the death of Lala Lajpat Rai.

#### REVISION OF CUSTOMS TARIFFS.

Mr. B. F. Madan (Bombay) moved : "This Federation urges upon the Government of India the necessity of remodelling the Indian Customs Tariff and that a Committee of Experts, including representatives of the Indian commercial bodies, be appointed to go into the question at an early date." He said the reason why such an enquiry had become necessary, was that the customs tariff had grown from a purely revenue tariff, with an average rate of 5 per cent, to a tariff partly for revenue and partly to carry out a policy of discriminating protection.

Mr. J. N. R. Mehta (Karachi) seconded, and Professor C. N. Vakil supported the resolution. Sir George Rainy remarked that he had received the agenda of this meeting about a week ago, just before the beginning of the Christmas holidays. In the time available it was not possible for him to look into the various papers which concerned his department, so carefully as he would have liked to do. The resolution was carried.

#### MR. HAJI'S BILL

Lala Harkishen Lal (Lahore) moved :—"This Federation strongly supports the Bill to reserve the Coastal Traffic of India to Indian vessels and urges the Government of India to encourage the participation of Indian vessels in the overseas trade of the country and to take early steps to develop the ship-building industry in India ; and while welcoming the establishment of the training ship "Dufferin" in Bombay, urges that another training ship be stationed for the Bay of Bengal." He dealt with the main objection to the Bill and submitted that the Bill did not really discriminate between the Britisher and Indian, but discriminated between the India and the rest of the world. The bill was very brief, and the operative sections were only two. One defined the controlling interest while the other laid down how the license was to be granted. As they had learnt from the speech of His Excellency the Viceroy that morning, Europeans and Indians were both co-operating with each other to train the youth of India for a sea-faring life in the training ship "Dufferin".

#### INDIAN SALT INDUSTRY

Mr. Faizullahoy Ganjee (Calcutta) moved : "This Federation urges upon the Government of India the necessity of reconsidering their attitude towards ordering a full enquiry into the condition of the Indian Salt Industry." He said that the Taxation Enquiry Committee's recommendation to refer the question of the salt industry to the Tariff Board was turned down by the Government of India, which action had been a gross injustice to this country. The question was whether the salt industry needed protection or not and whether India could become self-supporting as far as its own internal supply was concerned.

Sir George Rainy remarked that this was a question which concerned the Finance Department just as much as the Commerce Department. There had been no opportunity for consultation between himself and his colleague Sir George Schuster. In these circumstances, it was quite out of the question for him to deal with the matter. It was one which ought to be discussed between Sir George and him before anything was said. The resolution was carried.

#### THE OIL ENQUIRY.

Mr. Walchand Hirachand (Bombay) moved : "This Federation urges the Government of India to institute a further and fuller enquiry by the Tariff Board supplementary to the recent oil enquiry in respect of the points suggested by the

President of the Tariff Board." He said that the oil industry was alien in every sense of the term. It had foreign capital and a foreign directorate. Except that it happened to be located in India and employed unskilled Indian labour it was in no sense an Indian industry. Therefore, if the invaluable mineral assets of the country were to be conserved, if such a key industry which was vital for this important source of power was to be fully utilised for the benefit of India, the Government should see to it that the industry was predominantly Indian in character. Mere registration of companies in India and subscription of rupee capital as suggested in the opposite camp, would not satisfy them. They wanted the controlling interests of the industry to be Indian in every way. Oil had become a subject of international importance, and might soon be a cause of the next world war. Therefore, it was imperative and urgent that the country's supply of oil should be in the hands of its own nationals.

Sir George Rainy said that if this resolution was passed, it would of course be considered by the Government of India, but he was very doubtful about the result. The Government of India would have to be satisfied about the things before they agreed to an enquiry of the kind contemplated. In the first place, a *prima facie* case would have to be made out for believing that the consumers were seriously injured by the oil companies, and secondly that if an enquiry was undertaken, it was likely to lead to any concrete result. He had never been able to see the advantage of having enquiries which were likely to be infructuous.

The resolution was carried after which the Federation adjourned.

#### SECOND DAY—29th DECEMBER 1928

The Federation resumed its second meeting on this day, Sir Purushotamdas Thakurdas presiding.

#### Mr. Birla's Motion

Mr. G. D. Birla moved:—

"This Federation of the Indian Chambers of Commerce is emphatically of the opinion that India should be represented at all international Labour Conferences by Indians only and always by a full quota of delegates and advisers and strongly condemns the policy of appointing non-Indians to be her representatives, and urges that the delegation of a country to the Labour Conference should be national in character."

Mr. Birla said that the object underlying the resolution was self-explanatory. Their demand was that India should be represented through Indians and that the full quota of delegation should be sent to represent this country. They further demanded that every opinion which the Government of India forwarded from the country to the Labour Conference should be done after consultation with the mercantile bodies, and that at Geneva the Government delegates should take action in consultation with the employers' delegation. He emphasised that it was essential that India should be represented through Indians. It would be most disgraceful to suggest that no capable Indian were found to represent India at such a conference.

Mr. R. K. Shanmukham Chetti (Madras), in seconding, remarked from personal experience, that unless the full quota of delegates was sent, it was impossible to take part in all the committee meetings that were held simultaneously at Geneva where various issues affecting the destiny of India were discussed.

The Hon. Sir B. N. Mitra said that if this resolution were carried, it would receive the most careful consideration of the Government in due course.

The resolution was carried.

The Federation next adopted a resolution recommending Seth Baksturbhai Lalubhai as a delegate and Messrs. R. K. Shanmukham Chetti (Madras) P. Mukerjee (Punjab), B. Das (Behar) and Khan Bahadur A. Chandoo (Burma) as advisers to represent the employers in this country at the 12th session of the International Labour Conference and Mr. Jadunath Ray as a delegate and Messrs. H. A. Master, K. N. Neogy and Sheriff Hossain at the 13th session.

#### Delegation To League Session

Mr. D. P. Khaitan moved a resolution recommending to the Government of India that delegations to all international conferences and committees be composed of Indians only.

Mr. Khaitan said that this resolution was closely allied to the one already passed. This resolution, he said, dealt with the economic and financial organisation of the League of Nations whereas the other one dealt with the International Labour Conference which was a part of the former. The League of Nations had also got an organisation called the Economic and Financial Organisation, and it was under the aegis of this organisation that all matters dealing with economics and finances of the world except labour matters, were discussed under the auspices of the League. He hoped that the Government of India would have no hesitation in future to appoint only Indians who command the confidence of the country.

Sir George Rainy, while he did not like to commit himself in any way to any opinion in the matter, assured the delegates that any opinion expressed by the Federation would be taken into consideration.

The resolution which was duly seconded was carried.

#### Development Of Jute Trade

Mr. H. P. B. Garia (Calcutta) moved :—"In the opinion of the Federation, the Government of India should, as soon as possible, give effect to the recommendation of the Royal Agricultural Commission to appoint a central committee to jute on the lines of the Indian Cotton Control Committee who would try to establish organised market, promote legislation for the fixation of a permanent standard of quality for all dealings in jute, and bring about the establishment of a future market for jute like the Bombay Cotton market."

He said that jute was one of the principal crops grown in this country, and he thought it was essential that at least half the members of the proposed committee should be elected by the jute growing interests. It was seconded by Messrs. R. K. Chamarla and A. C. Chaudhury and carried.

#### Enquiry into Banking

Mr. G. D. Birla (Calcutta) moved a resolution urging the Government of India to immediately appoint an Indian Banking Enquiry Committee to look into the system of Indian indigenous banking, with a view to develop and foster the same. He said that India was a big country, having a vast population. Having regard to the needs and requirements of Indian agriculturists, it was essential that they should make a thorough enquiry into the present condition of Indian banking by a committee.

Mr. R. J. Udhani, on behalf of Sir Shapurji Billimoria, in seconding, regretted the decay of Banking in India, and pointed out that the necessity for such a committee was all the greater at present in view of the fact that though the Reserve Bank Bill was withdrawn by the Government of India, that question would have to be tackled by them sooner or later.

The resolution was carried.

#### Appointment of Trade Commissioners

Resolutions were also passed urging on the government the necessity of appointing experienced Indian businessmen as Indian Trade Commissioners in important commercial centres of the world and demanding that the High Commissioner for India should always be an Indian, and that he should be placed in the same status as the High Commissioners of the different self-governing colonies.

The Federation also passed a resolution congratulating the Government of their accepting the principle of calling tenders in India in Rupee currency and for delivery in India.

The meeting also adopted a resolution establishing an Indian National Committee of the International Chamber of Commerce, with Sir Purushottamdas Thakurdas as President and Mr. D. P. Khaitan as Vice-President. The proceedings then terminated.

# All India Trade Union Congress

The ninth Session of the All-India Trade Union Congress commenced at Jharia on Tuesday the 18th DECEMBER 1928 with Mr. M. Daud in the chair. More than one hundred and fifty delegates of various labour unions all over India attended the Congress. A large number of distinguished visitors including Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, Sj. Ramananda Chatterjee, Mr. Ryan and Mr. F. W. Johnstone were present. The open session commenced at 5 P. M. in the afternoon and terminated at 9 P. M.

Mr. F. W. Johnstone, who attended the Trade Union Congress as a fraternal delegate of the League against Imperialism was arrested at 9-30 P. M. when the Congress was being adjourned for the day. As he had come out of the pandal he was served with orders for leaving British India issued by the Bengal Government on the 14th evening while he was in Calcutta. Police officers were waiting outside and when he came out of the pandal after delivering a speech asking the the Indian Trade Union to be affiliated with the League he represented, he was taken into custody.

The Congress was opened with national songs punctually at 5 P. M. in a tastefully decorated pandal. President Mr. Daud was conducted to the pandal amongst cries of "Bande-Mataram" by the Chairman, Reception Committee followed by other distinguished persons. About two hundred delegates attended the Congress. The visitors including a large number of workmen of the adjoining coal fields were indeed very large compared with the population of the place.

Messages expressing sympathy with the Trade Union Congress and regret for attending it were received from Messrs. C. F. Andrews, and N. M. Joshi, the Pan Pacific Federation, Trade Union Congress, London, International Trade Union Federation, Amsterdam, Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congress Workers' Welfare League, Berlin and some other foreign labour associations.

## Chairman's Address

"We meet here to-day under a sense of deep sorrow for the death of our illustrious and noble countryman, Lala Lajpat Rai. No worse evil could have befallen the country at this critical juncture than the passing away of Lalaji. He was a selfless man and a true patriot. Though he stood for all that was best and noblest in Hinduism, he placed the country and its cause above his party and community. He was a great national leader in every sense of the term. He was born for the country, he lived for the country and died for the country. His unexpected death is a great loss to Indian public life and is a national calamity. We offer our humble tribute to the memory of this great and true man. We also offer our sincere condolences to the bereaved members of his family," said Sj. Gunendra Nath Ray, Chairman, Reception Committee, in welcoming the delegates of the Trade Union Congress.

Sj. Ray then gave a brief history of Jharia and said : "It is now a place where business people from all parts of the world have come and brought, and are bringing in, capital for the exploitation of its mineral resources. It is, therefore, a place where we can also expect a large number of the exploited. In fact, it is the centre of an important section of labour connected specially with coal mining."

"In 1921 when you met here on the last occasion, you saw her in affluence ; but since then she has been passing through bad times and has now arrived at a critical stage ; her only commodity—coal—finds no market and her coal industry is on the verge of ruin ; her collieries are being closed one by one and workers

are being thrown out of employment ; labour wages have been falling down and down and have now reached an irreducible minimum."

"One of the principal objects of the Trade Unions is to secure adequate wages for the labour. Consequently, it is no wonder that all capitalists and employers would view the Trade Union movement with suspicion and misgiving. Up till now, however, no principle or basis to determine a standard for labour's fair share of the earnings from the products of an industry, has been found and it is doubtful if such a standard will ever be found. Each case depends and must depend, on its own circumstances. For example, a labourer who works hard and economically is surely entitled to higher wages than one who does not possess such qualification.

"But though the wages of labour will thus depend upon circumstances and production of a particular industry, upon demand and supply or efficiency of labour itself, no fair-minded man can ask the employee to place himself at the mercy of his employer. Instances are not rare where the helpless position of labour is taken advantage of by the employer. The world is fast travelling into a new era of materialism and self-aggrandisement, the imperialists and capitalists, bureaucrats, and aristocrats, are ruling the world in combination. The only thing that is respected and obeyed by them is united public action, organised public effort. For the interest of trade, for the interest of industry itself, labour must organise and speak in a combined voice. Trade Union organisations are therefore a necessity, and to it in the words of our worthy leader, Mr. Joshi, "if the employers would not give labour a helping hand in the formation of unions, they will have at least to tolerate them."

"The activities of the Trade Unions in India have so far been confined to attempting to secure the redress of the grievances of their members by making representations to their employers. Unfortunately, their attempts in this direction did not succeed in producing the desired effect in several instances : and though they tried hard to avoid it, strike was the inevitable result.

"I cannot conceive that these strikes were started without any legitimate grievance and before any definite or ostensible grievance had been put forward or any serious effort made to find a solution by negotiation I am unable to admit that strikes in this country are too easily created and too easily started. My countrymen do not doubt for a moment that until these directly interested employers and employed, are fully acquainted with the causes of dispute and until every effort has been made by negotiations to arrive at some agreement, a strike should not be resorted to. But they feel, and I think rightly, that the withholding of labour is justifiable in cases of legitimate grievances, which after being "properly presented and considered are not remedied. Strike or non-co-operation, however undesirable or obnoxious to the strong, is the only weapon of the weak and the emasculated and when gross injustice is done to the weak and their appeal to the strong fails, it is no wonder that they would resort to strike. It is also no wonder that they would be met by the mighty force of capital. Heat generates heat ; and when feeling and passions grow stronger and stronger, both parties become unreasonable and go to excesses. This is happening in all ages all the world over with this difference that while in a free country we rarely, if ever, hear of the shooting of the strikers by 'the keepers of the peace', it is not uncommon in a country dependent on 'Trustees' for protection.

"Probably, however, with a view to deal 'swiftly and effectively' with the situation, the Government has introduced a Bill in the Legislative Assembly, which when passed, will render a general strike by workmen of different trades and industries illegal. This Bill will certainly be discussed by you and I refrain from entering into its details at this stage.

"It is true that the Trade Union movement in India is 'mainly economic in its origin' and it has, up till now, kept up its economic character ; but I doubt if it will be able to maintain this character long. To me it seems that the Economic salvation of India in its present political condition is impracticable. India by the extent and favourable conditions of her territory is capable of producing almost every article required for the use of man ; yet India with her low tariff is the dumping ground of the world. If this is to be stopped, if India is to build up her



industries and to have a share of the world's material wealth, nay even her own, she must have political salvation first. We may call it by any name, birth-right, natural right or inherent right, just right or justice, we cannot have it for the mere asking. No Government, much less an alien Government, is in a hurry to part with its power. You will have to wrest it from its hands just as the Barons did at Hunningham. It is true that India is physically weak ; but as no empire can last on brute force alone she needs have no reason for despair, no reason to believe that her future is "wrapped in fog and uncertainty." Her cause is just ; and in her fight for political freedom, sooner or later, she is bound to get the world's moral support on her side, and, the day is perhaps not far distant when her voice and the voice of God will act as one and be potent enough to silence the thunders of Whitehall. For this, India requires her children to raise their voice with the combined force of a nation ; she requires a national sentiment in her children and a community of hearts ; she requires the co-operation and organisation of her children ; whenever necessary, to sacrifice their personal, sectarian, communal and provincial interests. She also requires that when, by the grace of God, her time comes, the different organisations in the country, however small and jarring they may be at the present moment, will assist their Motherland in organising herself into a complete whole. When that day comes, I believe, the Trade Unions of India will not fail to do their quota in the country's cause. Till then let us live and do our duty.

### Presidential Address

Mr. Daud, the President, then delivered his address. At the outset he elaborately dealt on the history of industries and labour development of the factory system in India. Touching on the growth of labour movement in India, the president observed that the present labour movement in India fell into four distinct periods according to the dominant forces which influenced the course of its appearance and development. The first period, he said, was the closing chapter of the old panchayat system, the second started with the object of regulating child and women labour in factories during 1875 to 1891. The abolition of the indentured system was the main purpose of the third period, whilst the fourth period started with the principal aim of organising workers into trade unions.

Referring to the Montagu Chelmsford Reforms the President observed that the Reforms for the first time recognising it gave more impetus to labour movement in India. Discussing the various labour unions formed in India the president said that there were about 9500 workers under the various unions in transport work. The president made reference to strikes in Calcutta and Bombay and condemned the action of the Swaraj Party in the Calcutta Corporation in opposing the increment of one and a half rupee in the wages of scavengers and expressed sympathy with the workers of the South Indian Railway strike and appealed for dropping the cases pending against the workers and the union men.

The president pleaded for the abolition of racial inequalities in railway service and for the establishment of wages board and council representations of workers and employers for settling matters affecting the living, housing and terms of service. He condemned the plea that labour interest and politics were widely divergent. Speaking about the three constitutions for India proposed by the moderates, the Independent party and the All-Parties' Conference, the president remarked that they could accept neither the Independent party's proposition of complete independence as it was not feasible under the present condition of the country nor the moderate constitution for dominion status but they suggested universal adult franchise for men and women, guaranteed seats for labour representations in Central and Provincial Legislatures, provision of labour ministry in these bodies and protection of labour interests in Executive Council.

Concluding, the president referred to the South Indian Railway strike, expressing sympathy with the sufferers in the strike. He expressed the opinion that when the strike was over it was proper that all cases pending against railway workers and the union leaders should be dropped.

The sitting was then adjourned till next-day.

## Resolutions

*19th DECEMBER 1928*—The Congress met on this day to discuss and pass resolutions. At the outset it passed a resolution approving the action of Messrs Chamanlal and Andrews, Bakhale, Mahabubul Huq, and P. C. Bose in withdrawing from the British Commonwealth labour Conference in London. The resolution considered the British Labour party guilty of grave betrayal against the working class in India.

Mr. Mrinal Kanti BOSE moved a resolution asking the Government of immediately promulgating legislation for removing slum areas from industrial centres as well as offering subsidies and loans for building sanitary houses in those areas for the better housing of workers. He said that high mortality amongst Indians labouring in industrial towns was due to growing deterioration of its physical, moral and material conditions. Many foreigners visiting those places had been shocked and appalled. Houses in which industrial workers lived were not fit even for the use of animals and Government should take immediate steps for the amelioration of such disgraceful conditions.

A large number of delegates spoke supporting the resolution which was passed.

Resolutions expressing sympathy with the Port Trust Mariners' strike, scavengers' strike and other strikes in Calcutta, the Lilloah strike, Khargpur strike, South Indian Railway strike was moved from the chair and passed.

Dewan CHAMANLAL moved :—'The Congress protests against the employment of police and military force on almost every occasion of strikes and lockouts to intimidate workers into submission resulting in death in many cases and grievous hurt to unarmed workers. Such use of police and military force was for the interests of employers and against Government's declared policy of neutrality in industrial disputes.

"The Congress further warns the Government against discontent spreading amongst workers as a result of unwarranted use of force against them and calls upon all provincial Trade Federations to organise effectually for declaration of general strike, in case force was employed against workers".

Dewan Chamanlal said that the mandatory portion of the resolution asking the Trade Unions to organise for preparing for a general strike was indeed very necessary. The policy of Government so far as industrial disputes were concerned was in league with employers. The Government was always ready to bring forth police and military to intimidate workers. During recent times they had the experience of bullets at Khargpur, Lilloah, Bauria, South India and the other day at Bombay. The Police were always ready on some excuse for creating a row amongst workers with a view to intimidate them. The other day at Lucknow when the police charged the crowd assembled to express their indignation against the Simon Commission, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who was present there, was offered a revolver which he refused. It was subsequently discovered that the man who offered the revolver was a C. I. D. police officer. This fact itself spoke of police tactics. He was tired of speeches and condemnations. The only thing necessary for them was to organise themselves.

Mr. Mrinal Kanti Bose supporting the resolution congratulated his fellow workers for their receiving attention from the police. In many places workers were shot down and it was through this fire that their emancipation would come.

Referring to the Bamungachi shooting he said that magisterial enquiry elicited that shooting was unjustifiable. The Magistrate passed strictures against the police officer for opening fire, but no action was taken by the Government into the matter. It was raised in the Parliament only for a reply that the Magistrate was prejudiced. Yet the Magistrate's report was unchallenged. At Bamungachi and at other places shooting on workers was on the upper part of the body which proved that it was vindictive. The resolution was unanimously passed.

A resolution was also moved from the Chair and passed approving the action taken by Indian delegates during the recent British Commonwealth Labour Conference at London in withdrawing from it and that the Congress considered that

the British Labour Party had been guilty of grave betrayal against the working class in India.

Mr. Mrinal Kanti BOSE moved that in view of high mortality amongst working classes and moral, physical and material deterioration of workers which was considered to be largely in industrial centres, the Congress considered that Government should undertake comprehensive legislation for destruction of slum areas and that they should offer liberal subsidies and loans for building sanitary houses on those places. The resolution supported by many delegates was passed.

Another resolution sympathising with the strikers of Calcutta, Bombay, Kharagpur, South India and other places and specially with the workers at Bauria for their sustained struggle was also passed in the Congress.

*20th DECEMBER 1928*—The Congress resumed its third sitting this evening at 6-30 p. m. The resolutions which were adopted in the Executive Council meeting were placed in the Congress and most of them were passed. The Congress passed resolutions adopted in the Executive Council regarding election of office-bearers to the Pan Pacific Secretariat Amsterdam International and a deputation to the All Parties Convention. The Congress also passed resolutions for holding the Asiatic Labour Conference at Bombay in April and inviting all trade unions and labour organisations of pacific countries including South Africa and Straights Settlements to take part in that Congress. On the invitation of Mr. Ruikat, Secretary, Central Provinces Trade Union Federation it was passed that the next All India Trade Union Congress would be held at Nagur.

In view of the fact that the Executive Council meeting lasted long the President appealed to the house to abstain from speeches and ratify resolutions adopted in the Executive Council in order that the session of the Congress might be finished by the night. The house agreed and resolutions were passed against the Trades Dispute Bill and it was resolved that a general strike would be declared throughout India if the bill was passed.

A resolution protesting against the action of the government with regard to Lala Lajpat Rai's death was passed in the Congress. The resolution stated: "That this Trade Union Congress resolves to perpetuate the memory of Lala Lajpat Rai by instituting a fund to be known as Lala Lajpat Rai Labour Fund of at least a lakh of rupees, the fund to be utilised for the furtherance of labour movement in India in pursuance of a scheme to be drawn up by a committee appointed by the Executive Council. This Congress is of opinion that an independent, or judicial enquiry should have been held as to the cause of the death of Lala Lajpat Rai. This Congress considers that the executive enquiry held by Mr. Boyd was a mere eyewash and his report which practically repeats the official version of the incidents is wholly unacceptable. This Congress is further of opinion that the Government has been guilty of serious dereliction of duty in refusing independent enquiry and that its conduct is calculated to confirm the public conviction that but for injuries sustained Lalaji would not have died".

In concluding the session the President said that the session was indeed very momentous. As an emphatic protest against Mr. Johnston's arrest they had affiliated their union with the League against Imperialism which was a step taken for the prestige of labour movement, the Congress had actually gained much by electing Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as President. Pandit Jawaharlal was the only man who inspite of the Congress creed voiced what was really wanted by Labour.

With a vote of thanks to the Chair from the Reception Committee the session was closed.

### The Executive Council Meeting

The Executive Council of the Trade Union Congress met on the *20th DECEMBER* at 8 in the morning and continued till 6 p. m. discussions on several controversial matters, such as affiliation of the Indian Trade Union Congress to the Pan Pacific Secretariate, the Amsterdam Labour International and the Berlin League against Imperialism. The question of affiliation of the first two bodies was postponed on the ground that as the Trade Union Congress was in its infancy in India it should not get affiliated to any foreign body. The affiliation to the League

Against Imperialism was made on the motion of Dewan Chamanlal who explained that the affiliation was by way of an emphatic protest against the action of Government in arresting Mr. Jhonstone. Heated discussion also took place over the Trade Union Congress taking part in the All Parties Convention. It was decided that a deputation of fifty members from each union would take part in the Convention and place before it the demand of the Trade Union in forming a Indian constitution which would include the establishment of a social republic government in British Indian States, universal adult suffrage, freedom of speech, introduction of free compulsory education, nationalisation of services and non-enactment of any repressive measures. It was also decided that the deputation would place the demands in the Convention and if those were not considered the deputation would not take any part in the Convention.

On the proposal of Dewan Chamanlal, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru was elected as President of the Trade Union Congress for the next year and Mr. Joshi was elected secretary.

## Associated Chambers of Commerce

His Excellency the Viceroy opened the proceedings of the annual meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce of India and Ceylon on Monday the 17th DECEMBER 1928 at the Royal Exchange, Calcutta. There was a large and distinguished gathering, Sir Stanley Jackson, Governor of Bengal, was present, There were also present Hon. Sir George Rainey, Hon. Sir B. N. Mitra, Sir George Schuster (Finance Member), Hon. Nawab Nawab Ali Chowdhury, Mr. Moberly, Sir B. C. Mitter and Nawab Musharuff Hossain.

Sir George GODFREY, presiding, reviewed the past year's affairs, which he said, had been marked by many serious labour troubles carried on by long strikes which had resulted in loss of earnings to labourers amounting to many lakhs of rupees. Labour had been the aggressor, chiefly owing to professional agitators, and in the main the labourer had been the sufferer. It was deeply regretted by employers who might pay higher wages if Indian labour was more efficient, more regular in attendance and more anxious to achieve a modicum of skill. Before Indian labour could improve, a higher standard of living must be developed, for possessed with a desire for better wages to meet the cost of a better home life the labourer would work harder and with more skill.

Referring to the report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture the President pointed out that only three pages were devoted to India's jute crop which by export duties alone contributed Rs. 4 crores to the Central Government. The Commission's recommendation on this subject was that a Jute Committee be formed, on receipt of Rs. 5 lakhs a year to watch over the interests of all branches of the trade from the field to the factory.

He would like to see the small suggested allocation, roughly 1 per cent, of the named income, spent on an endeavour to secure better cultivation, improved methods of retting, storage of water for steeping and finally, perhaps the most important of all, co-operative selling by the growers. The ryots would undoubtedly receive better rates if they were organised to sell on a co-operative system, thereby avoiding some of the middlemen who handle the crop, and extract much profit from it before the fibre reached the mills and presshouses.

### Viceroy's Opening Speech.

In opening the session His Excellency the Viceroy delivered the following speech :—

"It is a great pleasure to find myself once more taking part in the general meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce, for I have pleasant recollections of a similar occasion at Cawnpore two years ago when I was last privileged to address your members. A Viceroy does not get as many chances as he would wish of meeting representatives of the great commercial life of India, and one of the chief advantages and pleasure, as I see it, of his visits to Calcutta is that he is able to meet so many businessmen on their own ground, and perhaps get a more direct insight into the realities of commercial problems than is possible in what you may not improbably consider the somewhat academic atmosphere of Simla and Delhi.

"But you may be sure that these matters are never very far from my thoughts, for I know well that the course of Indian trade is to a large degree an index to the welfare of a great proportion of the population of this country. The Associated Chambers are intimately concerned with all that affects the prosperity of India, and it is gratifying to have their assurance of all support and assistance to the Statutory Commission on whose present labours the future welfare of India so intimately depends.

"Perhaps the most interesting feature of the trade statistics of the past year is that, for the first time since the outbreak of the Great War, the total volume of trade reached, and just passed, the figure of 1913-14. The value of both imports and exports, as expressed in rupees, has of course very materially increased, but calculated at the price level obtaining at the out-break of war, the total trade would, last year, have been 429 crores of rupees as compared with 427 in 1913-14.

"The figures for the first six months of the present year moreover show a further improvement on those for the corresponding period in the past two years, in spite of the fact that in some trades, such as the rice trade, there has been a set-back. The general position therefore gives good ground for sober optimism, and although the comparative failure of the monsoon in some parts of India has caused anxiety, the position has been improved by favourable autumn rains, and the crop forecasts for India as a whole are now generally fair.

"The anxiety with which we annually watch the course of the monsoon reflects the dependence of India's commerce upon India's agriculture, and I appreciate from what you have just said, Mr. President, how clearly the Associated Chambers realise this truth. I know that everyone will echo the hope you have just expressed that, as a result of the Report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture, there will be a vigorous effort to develop India's agricultural strength.

"The essential inter-dependence of agriculture, commerce and industry is now generally recognized, and was accepted as an economic principle at the World Economic Conference at Geneva last year, at which the Indian delegation included a distinguished ex-President of the Associated Chambers, Sir Campbell Rhodes. The importance of Indian Agriculture in world economics was especially recognized by the appointment of another member of the Indian delegation, Dr. Hyder, to be Vice-Chairman of the Agricultural Committee of the Conference.

"As you have said Mr. President, it is not for all busy men to read and digest from cover to cover the able and comprehensive Report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture. It is hardly one of those pocket series which you can carry about with you and dip into at odd moments.

"But you are no doubt aware that last October the Government of India convened a Conference of representatives from all the Provinces in order to secure prompt and fruitful examination by all the Governments concerned of the more important recommendations made by the Commission. The Conference which was attended by the Ministers for Agriculture from seven Provinces was a conspicuous success and augurs well for the realization of the hope which Sir George Godfrey has expressed.

"So far my Government have been engaged in considering ways and means to carry out what the Commission regarded as of first importance—the establishment of an Agricultural Research Council; and we have made sufficient progress with this proposal to be able to hope that Government's decision in regard to it

will be announced early next year. There are many other important recommendations. Many of you will no doubt have observed what stress the Report laid on the importance of improved methods of marketing the produce of India. After pointing to the flaws inherent in the present system and to the educative effect and beneficial re-action which well-regulated markets will have upon the producer, the report makes valuable suggestions as to how this can be carried in effect.

"I will not trouble you with details, for I expect the Commission's conclusions are already familiar to many of you, but I notice that the Commission gave as their considered opinion that organized Trade Associations in India could give great assistance in raising the standard of markets, and I need hardly point out how usefully the Associated Chambers of Commerce can both help India and help themselves by co-operating in the development of improved methods of marketing.

"Some observations on this topic have, I see, been recently made in the report of the Indian Trade Commissioner on the trade of the last two years. In an analysis of modern trade tendencies and their application to India's export trade, Mr. Lindsay, after giving it as his opinion that the confidence, which was rudely shaken by post-War conditions, is gradually returning to the commercial world, remarks on two points which are at the moment specially pertinent to Indian trade.

"In the first place, he points out that the greater attention is paid now, than before the War, to the *quality* of goods offered for sale, and, secondly, that India's principal exports have to meet growing competition both from increased production in other tropical and sub-tropical countries and from synthetic substitutes.

"I feel little doubt that it is by organized marketing and grading, in agricultural and all other products, that India will keep her place in the world's market and retain the confidence of the foreign consumer.

"I therefore particularly welcome the Chambers' willingness, to which the President has just referred, to accept the recommendation of the Agricultural Commission that a Jute Committee should be formed to watch over the interests of all branches of the trade from the field to the factory."

"In parenthesis, I think I am bound to defend the long-suffering race of Finance Members—whose latest representative we are all glad to welcome here to-day—from the charge of such adamant hardness of heart as your President has brought against them. He will I have no doubt lay to heart the remarks the President has made which more particularly concern his administration. But to return to my main argument."

"The Commission gave it as their considered opinion that if jute wishes to preserve its present position, it is essential that every effort should be made to improve the quality, out-turn and methods of manufacture, and to maintain the relative cheapness of jute as compared with other fibres. It is satisfactory therefore that the Associated Chambers should in the important matter find themselves in agreement with the recommendation of the Commission.

"At the same time in some quarters there seems to be a certain apathy about marketing and grading, and a disinclination to believe that present methods could be improved. It is dangerous to ignore what is being done in other countries, and there is much food for reflection in an article which I saw recently in an Italian commercial paper on the rice industry in that country. It has, as you know, been often enough complained in the last few months that the export trade in rice is seriously depressed; and one of the reasons for depression has been admitted to be increased competition from Italy and other countries."

"The article I have spoken of shows that exports of rice from Italy have risen from 85,000 metric tons in 1923 to 260,000 in 1927; and this remarkable increase is attributed largely to improved methods of marketing and grading. The price fetched by Italian rice in the London market last September was 17 shillings per cwt, as compared with 12s 7½d, for Burma rice.

Now you have had recent experience of the value of grading for export in the success of the Coal Grading Board, which was constituted at the beginning of 1926 on the recommendation of Mr. Noyce's Committee. Since then the total

shipments from Kidderpore Docks for cargo and bunker have risen steadily from 1½ million tons in 1924-25 to nearly 3½ million tons last year. It would seem that here we have an example which other industries might usefully follow.

"Some of you may remember that two years ago at Cawnpore I referred to the possibility of extending the system of small cesses, and of thus financing organizations to look after the interests of the trades concerned. You have probably seen that a recommendation to this effect has been made by the Royal Commission on Agriculture. They held that such cesses should in their view be imposed only with the consent and at the instance of the trade, and they laid it down that ordinarily the trade concerned should provide all the funds required for its own committee.

It is, I think, legitimate to hope that the various trades will seriously consider the desirability of extending a system which has already been adopted with satisfactory results by the tea, shellac and cotton trades. Proposals for a cess on hides are now being considered by the Government, and it is worth noting the opinion of the Indian Trade Commissioner, in the report to which I have just referred, that the position of this important trade in the world's market would undoubtedly be strengthened if the standard of Indian hides could be improved, and particularly if measures could be taken to avoid defects in flaying.

You may remember that two years ago at Cawnpore I referred to certain legislation which was in contemplation for centralizing the administration of the Mercantile Marine. That legislation has now been passed and the technical staff of the Government of India is expected to arrive in India shortly. It is intended that the details of the transfer from the Local Governments should be arranged during the present cold weather, and the new Acts be brought into force on the 1st of April 1929.

On the same occasion I spoke of a question of vital concern to Indian shipping, the question of its *personnel* and the natural desire on the part of Indians to take a greater part in the transport systems of their country. To help to meet this claim the training ship *Dufferin* was established, and I should like to acknowledge the assistance of British Shipping companies in helping to start the ship and the interest that their representatives take as Members of the Governing Body.

It is also a cause for great satisfaction that shipping companies should have shown themselves so willing to take *Dufferin* cadets as apprentices, and I earnestly trust that Indian cadets will prove their capacity and will eventually find employment with companies which have given them their training.

We have heard during recent months not a little about economic discrimination between races in India, and point was given to these apprehensions by a private Bill which was introduced into the Assembly last session. I am not one of those who see in such discrimination any possible solution of the problems which now beset India's growth, for the interests of all the communities which compose the population of India to-day are far too intermingled to allow of separatist treatment.

Nor am I in favour of speeding up the development of Indian enterprise by the heroic—I might even say dangerous—methods advocated in the Bill. But it is only fair to recognize that there is another side to the question. The British Steamship companies have built up by their merit and enterprise a wonderfully efficient service in Indian waters, but it is only natural that the Indian should be acutely conscious of the fact that the great bulk even of the coasting trade of India is not in the hands of companies registered in India and is not served by steamers registered in India, and that an Indian Mercantile Marine hardly exists.

"Sentiment of course plays an important part even in purely economic matters, and this remark is particularly true of India at the present time. Moreover we have to remember that modern developments of shipping policy and practice make it difficult for Indian enterprise, unaided, to secure a share of the trade. Heaven forbid that I should embroil myself in the vexed questions of shipping rings, Liners' conferences and deferred rebates. I merely note the fact that

whatever economic justification there may be for such developments, they make it difficult for a new company to cut in, and it is not surprising in these circumstances that Indian capitalists should wish to invoke the aid of the Legislature."

"But I think that I am correct in saying that the main impulse behind the Bill I have referred to is not a mere desire to secure for Indian capitalists the profits which now are made by British companies. Rather it is an ambition—and who shall say that it is an unworthy ambition—that India should have its own Mercantile Marine and that the ships of that Mercantile Marine should be officered as well as manned by Indians?"

"The problem then as I see it is whether we can help India to realise this ambition without resort to methods of confiscation, and I should like you to regard it from this point of view. Stated in this way the problem may be less difficult. I hope indeed that a solution may be found in a spirit of co-operation and goodwill, and I commend this to your consideration. For as the political progress of India seems to me the logical and necessary out-come of the political genius of the English people, so should British and Indian industry and commerce work together, for India's commercial and industrial advancement."

"On one or two other questions raised in your speech, Mr. President, I would say a brief word. With regard to concessions in respect of the Provident Funds of private firms, I can assure you that the opinion which you have voiced to-day will be carefully considered in conjunction with the views expressed by the Local Governments who have recently been consulted."

"It is perhaps worth mentioning that the wider range of concessions for which you ask is one with which the Local Governments are concerned, and that it might be well for your body to urge their views upon the Local Governments in the first instance. You questioned too, Mr. President, whether there was any likelihood of a reduction in Central taxation combined with increased taxation for the Provinces. This would obviously be difficult of attainment, but the possibility of trade being so stimulated by reduced taxation as to improve the state of public finances generally is a matter which will certainly be studied very carefully by the Commerce and Finance Departments."

"I know that in such matters you need never doubt that all the experience and sympathy of my colleagues, Sir George Rainy and Sir George Schuster will be at your command. The question of an enquiry into banking, too, is one that Sir George Schuster is now applying himself to, and he will be glad, if you desire it to discuss the matter in greater detail with a delegation of your Chambers."

"There are other important topics on which I would have said something had time and your patience permitted, such as the position of employers and labour to which you, Mr. President, have referred. I shall hope to have the opportunity of mentioning some of them when I meet the Indian Federated Chambers towards the end of this month."

"In the meantime, gentlemen, I wish to offer you all my good wishes for the coming year, and an assurance of my continued interest in the welfare and in all the activities of your great Association."

## Proceedings & Resolutions

### Export Duty on Rice

The Viceroy's speech being over the Association proceeded to discuss and pass resolutions. At the outset Mr. W. T. Howison of the Burma Chamber moved that this Association is convinced that the present export duty on rice falls entirely upon the cultivator and recommends to the Government the immediate abolition of the duty.

The resolution was passed.

### Income Tax Act

Mr. H. G. Cock of Bombay Chamber moved that in the opinion of this Association, Section 37 of the Indian Income Tax Act 1922 should be amended



so as to make it clear that the powers conferred upon the officers mentioned in that Section shall be employed only for the purpose of enabling the said officers to make an assessment where any person has failed to furnish a return or for the purpose of enabling such officers to check any returns furnished to them; and that in respect of any requisition made under that section, the name of the said person shall be given. Further that to remove any doubt as to the power of the Income Tax officer under sub-section (4) of Section 22, a similar amendment be made to that sub-section.

### SECOND DAY—18th DECEMBER 1928

#### Heavy Freight Rates

Mr. C. S. Wentworth Stanley of the Karachi Chamber moved: "That this Association strongly urges on the Government the necessity for a substantial reduction in the railway freight rates on cotton from the interior to the ports, which never has been revised since the War and the post-war increases were imposed."

Sir George Rainey was not convinced on the materials placed before the Conference that there were any special and urgent reasons for making any reduction in railway freight rates on cotton. The case they were considering at the moment was totally different from the case of coal considered on Monday. Nothing had been brought to his notice which left in his mind the impression either that, traffic was not moving freely under the existing rates or that if a substantial reduction was made, Railways could look forward to a very substantial increase of traffic. He undertook that the matter would be examined.

The resolution was carried.

#### Oil Fuel Freight

Mr. H. G. Cocks (Bombay) moved: "That in view of the fact that liquid fuel furnace and Diesel oil are largely used in industrial concerns and public utility undertakings equivalently with coal, it is reasonable that the railway freight on such oil should be reduced correspondingly with any reduction that may be made in the freight on coal and coke."

Sir George Rainey promised that the matter would be duly considered. The resolution was carried.

#### Excessive Postage

Mr. C. H. Elphinston (Calicut) moved: "This Association invites the attention of the Government to high rates of postage now current in India. Should it not be possible to reduce the inland rates, having regard to the fact that the postage from England to India is three half-pence as against two annas from India to England, it is strongly urged that Indian rates should be brought into a line with English rates. It is further pointed out the minimum foreign postage rate from India has been increased from two and half annas to three annas which is excessive."

#### Commercial Conventions

Mr. W. T. Howison (Burma) moved recommending the Government of India to enter into and maintain commercial conventions where possible with all foreign Governments with which India is not already in treaty relations in order that Indian products may nowhere be prejudiced by the absence of most favoured nation provisions or by import restrictions and prohibitions which do not affect all countries alike.

Sir George Rainey said that negotiations were in progress at the present moment and the matter was being inquired into. The resolution was carried.

#### Vegetable Products

Mr. C. S. Wentworth Stanley (Karachi) moved: "The Association is gravely concerned at the agitation at present being conducted in various districts against the import and sale of vegetable products and strongly urges that Government should take steps to prevent interference with the legitimate trade of undoubted advantage to the public."

Sir George Rainey said the Government of India were fully conscious of the necessity of taking such steps as might be necessary to prevent undue interference with trade. The resolution was carried.

**Petty Thefts Nuisance**

On the motion of Mr. Bruce (Coimbatore) the following resolution was carried :—

"This Association invites the attention of the Government of India to the continued and widespread prevalence of petty thefts and pilferage of cargoes in seaports throughout India, in industrial centres, workshops and railways and are of opinion that the Government of India should at once take steps to investigate the extent to which the evil has assumed of recent years in India and how far special Acts, now in force in certain provinces have been able to cope with the situation and finally introduce legislation of an All-India nature with a view to stopping the growing evil.

**British Exploitation**

Sir George Godfrey, on behalf of the Bengal Chamber moved the following resolution which was adopted unanimously by the delegates present :—

"This Association claims, on grounds alike of India's interests and of common justice, that the Indian Legislatures should not by legislation or taxation indicating discrimination of a racial or communal character, imperil the existence or development of, or otherwise cause prejudice to, any commercial or industrial interests in India".

The above was a rejoinder to the attack of Indian nationalists. In moving the resolution Sir George declared :—It has been becoming steadily more apparent during the last two years, that the Indian extreme nationalist movement is not wholly a spiritual and idealistic movement. While some of its leaders like Mr. Gandhi regard Western commerce and industry as the evil to be fought, and Westerners merely as the deluded exponents of the spirit of industrialism, there are others, by no means spiritually minded, who have imbibed the industrial spirit and who cast envious eyes on the Westerners' successful ventures. For these men, Swaraj is not an end in itself, but appears to be a means by which to expropriate those who have through their energy and enterprise created industries and commerce, in order that they themselves may enter into the fruits of other men's labours.

We have listened for so many years to denunciation of the economic exploitation of this country by the British that we think the time has come for some reply. We hear so much of the wealth and prosperity of India before the British came that we may be permitted perhaps, to examine the basis of that legend. We hear so much of the evil that British commerce has done that we may be allowed to examine its achievements.

In the accounts of travellers to India of bygone ages we read much of the splendour and beauty of the towns of India, but little of the happiness of the peasants. We read of the fine quality of the manufactures, but also of the poor pay of skilled craftsmen whose work passed through the hands of so many middlemen that only a small fraction of the price reached the producer. I am reminded of the artist craftsman of Benares of to-day, serving his Indian employer, weaving gorgeous silks from his own design, working with an inherited skill, passed on from generation to generation. The reward of his skill is a little less than that of a weaver of grey shirtings in a Bombay Mill, but his forebears earned even less.

We hear to-day of the hardships of the merchant but Mandeslo tells us (Oaten p. 182) that the oppression of the Governors was such that a merchant's "only way to keep anything was to appear to have nothing." We are told to-day of the crushing cost of the bureaucracy, but one of the Great Mogul Viceroy's alone drew as a fixed salary four times the salary of a British Viceroy, in addition to his legitimate perquisites and illegitimate peculations. (Oaten p. 152). When we read of "whole provinces like deserts, from which the peasants have fled on account of the oppression of the Government" (Oaten p. 191), we may well ask ourselves whether this is not an Indian politician's picture of India under British rule rather than of India three and a half centuries ago.

It is of course true that since the British came to India certain industries such as handweaving have declined, but that particular result of the Industrial Revolution has occurred everywhere. If Lancashire is accused of devastating

India, Lancashire has equally devastated the English countryside, and for the good or harm done, the Bombay cotton industry must take its share of praise or blame—an industry, be it noted which owes its origin not to British but mainly created by indigenous enterprise, and all the more praiseworthy for that. This great Continent has produced its wonderful men of thought, men of speculation but not so many men of action.

When we learn of the greatness of Aryavarta we wonder that so much was left for us to do. When we read with admiration the bold metaphysical speculations of Sankaracharya and Ramanuja we wonder that the India which produced them should not have produced great experimentalists like Arkwright, Crompton or Hargreaves, like Watt, Stephenson or Edison, or great discoverers like Newton, Faraday or Curie.

We are accused of exploiting this country; we do exploit it, using the word in its proper sense. The coal has been here since long before we came, since before the Aryans came, since before the Dravidians, even before the aboriginals, who clearly have the oldest title to this country. But we—the last of a long series of invaders—happened to be the first to think of making use of the coal. The climate and soil of Bengal have always been suitable for growing jute, but we invented the machinery for weaving it and first found a commercial use and foreign markets for jute sacking. Tea has been a well-known and popular beverage in China for centuries, but we first thought of introducing the tea bush and cultivating it in the jungles of Assam, and on the foothills of the Himalayas. And orthodox Hindus and Mohammedans alike own us a debt of gratitude for introducing them a beverage more interesting than water and (unlike most good drinks) forbidden neither by the Quran nor by the Shastras.

No better example than the oil industry could be given of the legitimate and natural way that European industry has established itself for the benefit of the country. The existence of oil in the Venangyaung field and its use as a fuel were known long before the British arrived in Upper Burma, but only oil close to the surface was used, and it was won by the most crude methods. The mighty Burmah Oil Company to-day with its nominal capital of over 650,000,000 sterling has not taken wealth away from the Burmans. It has found and developed untold wealth previously unknown. To this day, close beside the scientific wells of the B. O. C. and other companies with bores running down 5,000 and 10,000 feet, you see the primitive workings of the hereditary *twinzahyoe*, whose supposed rights have been so scrupulously and meticulously observed by the British Government. Nor was the success of the B. O. C. easily won. Owing to the obstructive attitude of the King of Burma the first company floated to work the oil field was not a success and it was only through the faith, courage and imagination of Mr. Cargili, who bought up the property of the first company, that the B. O. C. has been built up from the most modest beginnings, when oil was floated down the Irawaddy on rafts, until it is now the largest British oil producing company in the world, and has spent innumerable lakhs in seeking oil in India proper.

The story of British predominance in shipping is similar. It is no doubt true that at one time Indian shipping formed a large proportion of the shipping on the Indian coasts than it does to-day—certainly this would be true if one includes, as perhaps one should do, the large tonnage of Indian pirates. Even so, however, I am not prepared to subscribe to the legend of the greatness of Indian shipping of recent centuries to the fullest extent. It is curious how the struggle for the trade between India and Persia on the one side and the Far East on the other was primarily between European nations from the time that Vasco de Gama discovered the sea route to India. If there had been keen Indian competition the profits would not have been so great as to cause Portugal, Holland and England to value the trade so highly. Some of our Indian friends draw pictures of the shipping weight of India of past days, of the widespread shipbuilding industry, but I doubt if they are correct in alleging now that they have retrogressed.

But whatever may have been the extent of Indian shipping in the days of sails and oars, the invention and introduction of the steamer by the British effected

a revolution on the sea, and nations which did not adapt themselves to the new industry, for such it was, found themselves left behind in the race. So it was with the Chinese, the Spaniards and the Indians. Where to-day are the quinqueremes of Nineveh? The Iraqis who are now ejecting Indians on political considerations from posts they are specially qualified to hold, may take another page out of the Indian nationalists' book and blame the Indian lascar for the loss of the maritime supremacy Nineveh enjoyed 4,000 years ago.

I sometimes wonder if the Indian nationalists half a century hence will accuse the British of having destroyed the great indigenous industry of the buffalo driver, describing how the train and the motor lorry were invented for the express purpose of destroying the livelihood of that ancient calling.

One may understand and indeed respect the point of view of Mr. Gandhi who sincerely believes that modern industrialism, like modern medicine, is in itself an evil, as making for "this strange disease of modern life with its sick worry, its divided aims, its heads overtaxed, its palsied hearts ... .." and as fatal to the old simplicity of rural India which he values so highly. An we too have our reactionaries in Mr. Belloc and Mr. Chesterton who preach much the same doctrine of *bidding the tide stand still*; but we cannot respect those who envy our industrial success so much that they aim at securing the ownership or control of our most flourishing concerns.

There is so much in the Nehru Report that indicates deep thought that I am disappointed to find an impossibly weak suggestion bearing on this matter. The Nehru Report proposes to confine the franchise to natural-born and naturalized Indian subjects. We are to be deprived not only of our communal representation, but even of the franchise, and industries are to be owned by nationals only—meaning those that have the franchise.

I am confident that Parliament would never consent to any such disfranchisement of a community so long and honourably connected with this country and its advancement. Even if it did, India would be well advised to consider the obvious retaliation to which she would be exposed in other countries.

We say that the policy of discrimination, unreasonable because the greatest need of India to-day is further development, more intensive exploitation, and there are as yet few signs that either Indian capital or Indian enterprise will or can undertake that task. Events of the past two years have most clearly indicated that India cannot close her doors to the importation of overseas capital, if she is to progress. Confidence is a shy bird, and a policy of expropriation or repudiation to which some Asiatic countries and South American Republics have at times shown a learning, will effectively destroy India's credit and good repute.

Nor are we disposed to rest our argument merely on a plea of expediency. We are sometimes accused of using the plea of India's good to advance our selfish interests. I do not hesitate to admit that we are deeply concerned with whatever affects our pockets—but I do not think it lies in the mouth of the highwayman to blame the traveller who does show such concern. In no spirit of truculence, let me say that we are not disposed meekly to hand over the rich prizes which we and our fathers, with so much risk, expenditure and labour have created and developed to the benefit alike of the inhabitants of India, the Indian Exchequer and ourselves.

By our capital and industry we have placed India a hundred years ahead of China, but there is ample room for our commercial and industrial ventures to exist alongside those to be set up by Indians.

This resolution has been considered most thoughtfully from every point of view. We hold out the hand of friendship to our Indian co-workers in business. We refuse to do anything to harm their chances or to bar the way to their advancement, but we expect reciprocity. We insist that by deeds and practice we stand in the position of Nationals of this great Continent, and we definitely declare that while we are ever willing to continue to work on equal terms in a most friendly spirit with our Indian commercial friends, we refuse to be submitted to legislation alike to our own and India's interests.

# The Independence for India League.

On the eve of the League's meeting in Delhi Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, as Convenor, issued the following statement:—

"The Independence for India League, as is well-known was started at Lucknow at the time when the All-Parties Conference met there. Provisional rules were framed and some conditions of membership were also laid down. Every one who subscribed to the rules and conditions could join the League. Subsequently, Independence Leagues were started in other parts of the country. This was a welcome sign that the Independence movement was strong and wide-spread in the country. It is not clear, however, what relation these Provincial Leagues bear to the organisation started at Lucknow. Only those who have actually joined the latter and accepted its provisional rules and conditions of membership can be considered its members. It appears that many of the members of the Provincial Leagues have not done so. There are, for instance, definite clauses in our provisional rules excluding communalists from joining our League. I do not know if such clauses exist in the rules of other Leagues. I gather that other Leagues have been formed with the object of affiliating themselves at a later stage with the organization started at Lucknow. They will be welcome if they do so.

"For such organisations apparently aim solely at getting the National Congress to adhere to Independence resolution and having succeeded in this purpose to disband. It is a permanent organisation with a definite policy and programme. It will co-operate with pleasure with all other organizations which have the same objects in common with it. But its constitution can only be settled by its own members. The meetings of the Independence For India League formed at Lucknow which are going to be held in Delhi as has already been announced, are open to all members who have already joined it. They are not confined to representatives. Members of other Independence Leagues are welcome to attend these in an advisory capacity. Some such members have already been invited to do so. But only full members of the organization started at Lucknow who have accepted its provisional rules and conditions are entitled to determine the constitution and the programme of the League."

## The Delhi Meeting.

Accordingly the first meeting of Independence for India League was held in Delhi on the 3RD NOVEMBER 1928. Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar was elected President of the League with S. J. Subhas Chandra Bose and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as General Secretaries. A provisional Central Council of 20 members was formed. The members would, in their respective provinces, organise leagues.

The following were provisionally elected to the Central Council:—

Bengal—Messrs. Subhas Chandra Bose, Kiran Sanker Roy and Hari Kumar Chakravarty.

U. P.—Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Messrs. Ganesh Sanker Vidayrathi and Sriprakash;

Behar—Maulana Abdul Bari;

Andhra—Messrs. Sambhamurthi and Viswanatham;

Tamil Nadu—Mr. Satyamurthi;

Bombay—Mr. Jamnadas Mehta;

Punjab—Mr. Kedarnath Saigal;

Karnatak—Mr. Hardikar.

The rest of the Council will be filled up later on.

## THE INDEPENDENCE FOR INDIA LEAGUE

It was decided that members of communal organisations would be debarred from becoming members of the Independence League. For the present it was decided that members of such communal organisations as the Hindu Sabha, the Moslem League, the Sikh League and the Justice Party could not be members of the Independence League.

A committee consisting of the office-bearers and Messrs. Jamnadas Mehta and Lala Sankar Lal was appointed to draw up a list of communal organisations coming under rule 7 of the Constitution, with instructions to report to the next meeting of the League when it meets in Calcutta during Congress time.

It was also decided that the League would be in touch with the League Against Imperialism and send delegates to the next meeting of the League in Paris. There were some formal discussions about the programme.

### *Text of the Draft Constitution.*

The Independence for India League met again on the next day and agreed upon the following Draft Constitution and Rules:—

- (1) The name of the League shall be Independence for India League.
- (2) The object of the League shall be the achievement of complete independence for India and reconstruction of Indian society on a basis of social and economic equality.
- (3) Every person (a) who has attained the age of 18 and (b) who believes in the object of the League, (c) who is opposed to "communalism" of every kind and (d) who accept the Constitution and rules of the League and agrees to abide by the discipline of the League and (5) who is prepared to work for the League to the best of his or her ability may become a member of the League provided that it shall be open to the League not to enroll at its discretion any person.

Note:—Communalism means advocacy of political or economic rights based on membership of religion, sect, or caste.

(4) Every member of the League shall also be a member of the Indian National Congress.

(5) Every member of the League shall pay a subscription of Rs. 1/- per annum which shall be sent in its entirety to the General Treasurer of the League. Out of Re. 1, 8 annas shall go to headquarters and 8 annas to the province. There shall be a tax on income of members at the following rates:—Rs. 50 to 100 should pay 1 per cent. Rs. 100 upward 2 per cent. up to a maximum of 10 per cent. per annum. Out of the taxation 50 per cent to go to the local branch, 25 per cent to the provincial branch, and 25 per cent to the All-India branch.

(6) No member of the League shall advance any claim on behalf of himself or group for political or economic right based on membership of religion, sect or caste.

### **No Communalism.**

(7) No member of an organisation, which has for its object attainment of political or economic rights based on membership of religion, sect or caste, can be a member or associate of the League.

(8) The League shall oppose "communalism" in every way but it may support when it considers it proper and necessary by mutual arrangement between two or more groups or communities.

(9) There shall be an (a) All-India Council of the League, (b) Provincial Councils and, (c) local branches in towns and rural areas.

(10) Local branches may be formed in any town or village or group of villages having a minimum of 10 members with the sanction of the Provincial Council or its Executive Committee; provided that there shall not be more than one branch for the same area.

(11) Local branches may elect Executive Committees and office bearers.

## Provincial Council.

(12) The Provincial Council shall consist of representatives of local branches. Each local branch shall have right to send representatives to the provincial council in proportion to the number of members on its rolls according to the following rules :—From 10 to 50 one representative, from 51 to 100 two representatives, from 101 to 200 three representatives and for each additional 100 one representative.

(13) The Provincial Council may frame rules and regulations for the formation of local branches and for the carrying on of the work of the League in the province concerned, provided that no such rule or activity is inconsistent with the rules and general policy of the League as interpreted by the All-India Council of the League and provided further that the All-India Council shall have power to suspend or rescind any rule which, in its opinion, is improper.

(14) The right to admit any person to membership of the League shall rest with the Provincial Council concerned, subject to the right of appeal to the All-India Council or its Executive Committee. The local branches may, however, make recommendations in this behalf. The Provincial Council shall have the power, subject to right of appeal to the All-India Council or its Executive Committee, to expel any member if, in its opinion, such a member or associate, has (a) joined or is a member of an organisation which has for its object the attainment of political or economic rights based on membership of religion, sect or caste, or (b) advocates communalism or (c) has acted or is acting as agent of any alien authority or organisation which desires to keep India under Alien Rule, or (d) acts adversely to the League or its policy or contravenes its discipline.

(15) The Provincial Council shall elect an Executive Committee not exceeding 20 in number including the office-bearers. This Committee shall act on behalf of the Provincial Council and in regard to matters arising under two preceeding articles, may take immediate action against subject to subsequent confirmation of the Provincial Council.

(16) In the formation of the Provincial Councils the Indian National Congress division of province will be adhered to.

## All-India Council.

(17) The All-India Council of the League shall consist of representatives elected by the Provincial Councils in the following proportions: Every Provincial Council having 20 or less members to elect two representatives. From 20 to 30 three representatives. For each additional 10 or less one representative. The representatives of the Provincial Council on the All-India Council thus chosen may co-opt up to 5 members to the All-India Council.

(18) The All-India Council shall function even though all the provinces have not chosen their representatives.

(19) The All-India Council shall have as office-bearers the President, one or more Vice-Presidents as Treasurer, one or more Secretaries.

(20) The All-India Council may elect an Executive Committee consisting of office-bearers and others, provided that the total number shall not exceed 15.

(21) The All-India Council shall lay down from time to time general policy and programme of the League and in all matters concerning the League the decision of the India Council shall be final.

(22) The All-India Council may frame rules and regulations to supplement this constitution.

(23) The All-India Council shall also have power to amend and alter this constitution, but no such change can be made except by a majority of 2/3rds, of the members present at the meeting and after due notice of the proposed change has been sent to all members of the All-India Council.

(24) The All-India Council shall have power to associate the League with other organisations in India and elsewhere which have similar objects and to co-operate with them.

## THE INDEPENDENCE FOR INDIA LEAGUE

(25) The All-India Council shall meet during the Congress week in December at a place where the Indian National Congress holds its sessions and may also meet from time to time whenever necessary.

(26) The All-India Council may convene conferences of the League, may be open to all members of the League or to all members of the Provincial Councils or to representatives specially elected by local branches in such manner or proportion as the All-India Council may lay down.

(27) The year of the League for payment of subscriptions and keeping of accounts shall be from January 1 to December 31.

## Transitory Provisions.

(1) A general meeting of the members of the League which adopts this constitution shall elect a Provisional All-India Council consisting of twenty five members including President, two Secretaries and a Treasurer.

(2) The Provisional All-India Council shall immediately proceed to organise for the formation of local branches and Provincial Councils and for election of an All-India Council in accordance with this constitution.

(3) As soon as an All-India Council has been elected the Secretary of the Provincial Council shall fix a suitable date and place and convene a meeting of the new Council. The Provincial Council shall thereafter cease function.

(4) The Provisional All-India Council may appoint provincial organisers or provisional Provincial Committees to organise branches of the League.

(5) The Provisional All-India Council and the Provisional Provincial Committee shall have powers accorded to elect the All-India Council and Provincial Councils respectively in this constitution except that the Provisional All-India Council shall not have power to alter the constitution.

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